

SAINT PAULS.

NOVEMBER, 1869.

THE THREE BROTHERS.

CHAPTER XIX.

CHARLOTTE STREET, FITZROY SQUARE.

LAURIE's removal was not accomplished with the passionate haste which distinguished that of his brother Ben. There was no particular hurry about it. The padrona, with the natural impatience of a woman, found a lodging almost immediately, which he saw and approved; but Laurie took his time, and consoled poor Mrs. Brown at Kensington Gore, and found her a lodger in the shape of a "real harts-gentleman," as she herself perspicuously expressed it, having felt in her soul from the beginning that Laurie was something of a sham. Her new tenant was a young painter who had made a successful début at the last Academy, and was for the moment a man whom the picture dealers delighted to honour. He was ready to take Laurie's pretty fittings, his contrivances, everything he had done for himself; but Laurie's good sense deserted him on that point. The money would have been convenient no doubt; but he could not part with the rubbish of his own collecting and contriving, which represented to him not so much money, but so many moments of amusement and pleasant thoughts. There was not room for half of them in Charlotte Street, where he was going; so he carried his shelves and stands, and quaint little cupboards, to No. 375, Fitzroy Square, and put them up in every corner he could find, the children hanging on him as he did so in an admiring crowd. So that he got a great deal more good of his belongings than Ben did of the marqueterie and buhl; and his successor furnished the rooms at Kensington Gore with conveniences of a much more expensive kind, and was altogether more splendid, and lavish, and prodigal than Laurie, whose tastes were very unobtrusive. His new lodging in Charlotte Street was on the first floor; the front room,—called the drawing-room,—

had three windows in it, one of which was cut up into the wall a few feet higher than the others, giving that direct sky-light which is necessary to a painter; and there was a sleeping room behind. This was all Laurie's domain now-a-days, and the rooms were not large. There was a table in the corner near the fireplace, as much out of the way as possible of the great easel and the professional part of the room, where he ate his breakfast, and anything else he might find it necessary to regale himself with at home, in a meek kind of humble way,—under protest, as it were, that he could not help himself. His new landlady's ideas on the subject of cooking were of the most limited character. She gave him weak tea and bacon for breakfast without any apparent consciousness of the fact that such luxuries pall upon the taste by constant repetition, and that a diet of *toujours perdrix* wearies the meekest soul. Laurie thought it most expedient, on the whole, not to inquire into her sentiments in respect to dinner, but swallowed his morning rasher with a grimace, and was, on the whole, "a comfortable sort of gentleman," the woman reported;—"not like some as thinks they can't give too much trouble." But he missed the mistress of Kensington Gore. He missed the neat maid, and his boy, who exasperated him in the studio, and kept all his friends in amusement; and it was a different thing looking out from the dreary windows in Charlotte Street upon the dreary houses opposite,—upon the milkman and the potboy wending their rounds, and the publichouse at the corner, and the awful blank of gentility in the windows on the other side, to what it used to be when he could glance forth upon the sunny Park from among his flowers, with, even at this time of the year, the old ladies taking their airing, and the nurserymaids under the leafless trees. Nurserymaids and old ladies are not entrancing objects of contemplation except to their respective life-guards and medical men; but still it was better than Charlotte Street. Miss Hadley lived opposite to him, and was by no means of his opinion; and when she was at home watched with a little amusement for such glimpses of her neighbour as were to be had. In the morning,—when there was not a fog,—Laurie, to start with, barricaded his windows, leaving only the upper part of the middle one unshuttered, and then set himself to work before his easel with Spartan heroism. Old Miss Hadley, who knew all his story, had her chair near her window, entering into the little drama with zest, and kept her eye upon him. For the first day or two he would remain in this sheltered condition until the afternoon light began to fail, when all at once he would sally forth with an alacrity and air of relief which much amused the watcher. But by-and-by this power of activity began to wane. "My dear, he's getting a little tired," the old lady said, with a chuckle, to her sister, a week after Laurie's arrival. "I heard the bolts go about one o'clock, and the window opened; and there he was in his velvet coat, with his

palette and all the rest of it. I am sure Mr. Welby never looked so professional; and he has a nice brown beard coming, and I like the looks of the lad," said Miss Hadley, who was a soft-hearted old soul.

"He is not such a lad," said Miss Jane, "and his beard has been come this twelvemonth at least; but I never thought it would last very long. I hate amateurs." For all that, however, she would look up and nod at Laurie, when she came home early and the young man appeared at his window. As the days went on old Miss Hadley found her life quite brightened up by the new neighbour, whose proceedings she watched with so good-humoured an interest.

"He had Shaw the Guardsman to sit to him to-day," was her next report; "and dreadfully bored the poor boy did look to be sure. I saw the warrior go away, and then our friend stepped out on his balcony and yawned as if his head would have come off." Next time the report was of a different character. "The boy is getting used to us," the old lady said; "he has been buying some plants for his window. He stood a long time to-day and watched the Jenkinsons getting into their dog-cart. He took off his hat, my dear, when he was going out, when he saw me come to the window. He knows I am your sister, I suppose."

"I do not admire his taste watching the Jenkinsons," said Miss Jane with a momentary frown of jealousy. She would have been very indignant had any one called her a match-maker, and yet almost without knowing it there had come into her head a little plan about Laurie and "the child."

"Bless you, he was only amusing himself," said the elder sister. "I have no doubt it looked very funny to him,—all the fuss, and the cloaks, and the bottles sticking out of the basket. They were going to see their married sister at Battersea, my dear. Her husband is a coal-merchant, and I believe they are very well to do. But I am very glad, I must say, that Mr. Renton went opposite to live, and not at the Jenkinsons. So many girls in a house when people let lodgings is not nice; a young man may be inveigled before he knows; and Mrs. Robinson is a very respectable sort of a person; I am very glad he has gone there."

"I daresay he thinks it miserable enough," said the governess. These little talks occurred every evening, and though Miss Hadley did not confide all the vicissitudes of Laurie's life to Mrs. Severn, yet the main incidents became generally known "in the Square." They knew that Shaw had been sitting to him, and that he had been bored, and the incident afforded no small amusement to a circle of admiring friends.

"It must be Miss Hadley who has betrayed me," said Laurie; "the fellow has such heaps of talk. I declare I know everything about his family, from the first of the name down to his sister's little Polly."

Little Polly it was. And if a man may not be permitted to yawn after two hours of that——"

"A man might be permitted to yawn in the midst of it," said the padrona, "which I am sure you didn't. But it was droll to rush out into your balcony, and relieve yourself as soon as he was gone."

"There is no air in that little hole of a place," said Laurie; and then he bethought himself that the other people about him were all of them inmates of similar holes. "I mean it's very nice, you know," he added, "and close to everything,—schools, and British Museum, and everything a man can desire. But I am very fond of as much air as I can get."

"I always thought this was a very airy neighbourhood," said little Mrs. Suffolk, who lived in another of the streets near Fitzroy Square, "and so handy for the children; in five minutes they can be in the Park."

"One gets never to listen to those fellows," said her husband; "if you take an interest in them they go and make money of you. Their wives are always ill, and their children dying, and that sort of thing. Glossop's got your old rooms over at Kensington, do you know, Renton? And come out no end of a swell. I don't know why, I am sure, unless that he has a friend on the 'Sword.'"

"Not so bad as that," said Laurie. "Those were two very pretty pictures of his this year."

"Oh, ah, pretty enough," said the other; "if that is all you want in a picture. British taste! But I'd like to know what sort of people they must be who like to hang these eternal simperings on their walls. I believe there are heaps of men who don't care twopence for art. But to choose bad art where good is to be had, out of mere perverseness!—I don't believe in that. They pin their faith on the 'Sword,' and the 'Sword' lies and cheats right and left, and looks after its own friends; and the British public pays the piper. When one thinks of Glossop, that one has known all over the world, in Laurie Renton's pretty rooms at Kensington Gore!"

"And Laurie here!" said the padrona, "which is great luck for us. But, my friend, you are mistaken. There are heaps of people, as you say, who prefer bad art to good. It is of no use pretending to deny it;—and," Mrs. Severn added with a little sigh, "we all trade upon it, I fear, if the truth were told."

"No, indeed, I am sure not that," said the painter's wife. "There stands one who never does. I say to him a hundred times, Reginald, dear, do think of a popular subject; do paint something for common sort of folks!—but he never will. They say it is only the nouveaux riches that buy now-a-days," Mrs. Suffolk continued in injured tones, "or dealers; and we know nobody who writes on the 'Sword.' You do, of course, Mr. Renton,—you who have been so much in the world."

"I met Slasher the other day at the club," said Laurie with a laugh which he could only half restrain. "He is not such a bad fellow. If you will let Suffolk bring you to my little place some time, I will show him to you. He does not bite in private life."

"Oh, I don't know that I should like to meet such a man," the little woman said with an anxious glance at her husband; and then she took Laurie a step aside, and became confidential. "If you would but make Reginald and his friends, Mr. Renton! I don't mind speaking to you. Nobody knows what talent Reginald has; and I am so afraid he will get soured with never finding an opening; and he can't afford to keep up a club like you young men, and we have been so much out of the world. What does it matter studying nature and studying the great masters, and staying out of London till everybody forgets you?" the poor young woman continued, with tears in her eyes. She was young, and it was hard upon her to keep from crying when she met Laurie's sympathetic look. "It is not so much the money I am thinking of," she said, "but if Reginald were to get soured——"

"I'll get Slasher to meet him directly," said Laurie with eager promptitude, "and you may be sure everything I can do——"

"Oh, thanks!" said the painter's wife. "It is not that he wants any favour, Mr. Renton, but only an opening; and we have been so much out of the world."

"I wonder you don't get up a Trades-Union, and make a stand," said Mrs. Thurston, who was literary. "How anything can keep alive that is so badly written as the 'Sword,' I don't know. It is because you are all so eager to see what it says about you, even though you hate it. Just like the articles in all the papers about women! If women were not so curious to see 'what's next,' do you think any one would take the trouble to write all that? Don't mind it, and you take away its power."

"Ah, it is so easy for you," cried Mrs. Suffolk;—"you have nothing to do but to go to your publisher; but what with the Hanging Committee putting all their friends on the line, and those wicked papers that never think of merit, but only of some one the writers know——"

"That's enough, Helen," said her husband with an attempt at a smile; "you talk as if we minded. But what is the criticism of an ignorant fellow, who does not know a picture when he sees it,—to me,—or any one?" he added with the slightest half-perceptible quiver of his lip. "Constable has just come back from Italy, Renton;—one of our old set;" and so the talk ran on.

This little party was assembled as before in the great drawing-room. There was a fire now which made it brighter and took away something of its quaintness, and the padrona and her guests had drawn near it, carrying the light and the circle of faces into the centre of the room. Now and then somebody would sing, or play,—but talk

was what they all loved best, and music as an interruption of the latter was not greatly cultivated. The padrona herself was always working at something with her swift dextrous fingers; and the ladies who formed her court had generally brought some work in their pockets, to add to their comfort while they talked. Laurie spent the next half-hour standing with Suffolk before the fire, talking of Italy, where they had met, and of the old set, with all that curious mingling of laughter and sadness which accompanies such recollections. Of "the old set" so many had already dropped by the way, as the passengers dropped through the trapdoors in Mirza's vision, while yet the fun of their jokes and their adventures lasted vividly in their comrades' minds. "You remember poor old So-and-so," the young men said to each other, looking down with their brown faces on the soft glow of the fire,—*"what fun he was! what scrapes he was always getting into! There was not a painter in Rome who did not turn out the day of his funeral!—and poor Untell, with his bad Italian. What nights those were in the Condotti! There never was a better fellow. Did you hear what an end his was?"* This was how the talk went on,—without any moral in it as of the vanity of human joys; nothing but pure fact, the laughter and the tragedy interlaced and woven together; while the ladies round the lamp with the light on their faces, talked too, but not with such historical calm, of the injustices of the "Sword," and of the Academy, and of the public; of the advantages of other professions,—literature, for example,—at which its representative shook her head; of the children's education and their health, and, perhaps, a little of the ills of house-keeping,—subject sacred to feminine discussion. Women do not meet, I suppose, nor do women die as men do. They had no such melancholy jovial records behind them to go over,—their talk was of the present and the future,—a curious distinction,—and the padrona's society numbered always more women than men.

Next day, perhaps, it would be at Suffolk's house that Laurie spent his evening, which was a house not unlike the one in which he himself lived,—a thin tall strip of building in which two rooms were piled upward upon two rooms to the fourth storey. The two parlours on the ground floor were domestic, and there Mrs. Suffolk sat, very glad to see her husband's friends when they came in, but not so entirely one of the party as when the padrona was the hostess. Her little room, though it was as prettily furnished as humble means would allow, was not calculated for the reception of a crowd, and after they had paid her their devoirs, the men streamed up-stairs to the corresponding but larger room above, which was the studio,—a place in which there were no hangings to be poisoned with their tobacco, nor much furniture to impede their movements. Perhaps the wife of one would come with him and take off her bonnet and stay with Mrs. Suffolk, bringing her work with her,

and resuming these endless unfailing talks about the children, and the housekeeping, and the injustices of the world. For it must be understood that the artist life I am attempting to describe is not that of the highly-placed, successful painter, against whom the Academy has no power,—who is perhaps himself on the Hanging Committee, and has the “Sword” at his feet in abject adoration;—but of the younger brotherhood in a chronic state of resistance to the powers that be, and profoundly conscious of all the opposing forces that beset their path. Little Mrs. Suffolk had care on her brow, as she sat with her sister in art and war, in the little drawing-room downstairs, discussing the inexpediency of those wanderings to and fro over the earth, which probably both had gone through and enjoyed, but which oftimes made the public and the picture dealers oblivious of a young painter’s name. Up-stairs, however, there would probably be five or six young fellows, of a Bohemian race, bearded and bronzed and full of talk, who had not yet taken the responsibilities of life on their shoulders, and laughed at the wolf when he approached their door. Two or three of them would collect round Suffolk’s picture, which he had been working at all day, to give him the benefit of their counsel, in the midst of the wreath of smoke which filled the room. Most of them were picturesque young fellows enough,—thanks to the relaxed laws of costume and hair-dressing prevalent among them. And to see Suffolk with the lamp, raising it in one hand to show his work, shading it with the other that the light might fall just where it ought to fall, tenderly gazing at the canvas on which hung so many hopes, with the eager heads round him studying it judiciously, would have made such a picture as Rembrandt loved to paint.

“I don’t quite like that perspective,” said one. “Look here, Suffolk, your light is coming round a corner,—the sun is there, isn’t he?—or ought to be at that time of the day.”

“What time of the day do you call it?” said a second.

“Why, afternoon, to be sure,” cried the first critic; “don’t you see the shadows fall to the left hand, and the look in that woman’s eyes? It’s afternoon or I’m an ass! Did you ever see a woman look like that except in the afternoon?—sleepiest time, I tell you, of the whole day.”

“She’s weary of watching, don’t you see,” said his neighbour. “Matter of fact soul! But I’d get that light straight, if I were you, Suffolk. He’s wrong about the sentiment, but he’s right about the light.”

“Give us the chalk here,” said Constable, who had just come back from Italy; “there’s just a touch wanted about the arm, if you don’t mind.”

“The colour’s good, my dear fellow,” said Spyer, who was older than any of them, and a kind of authority in his way, “and the sentiment is good. I like that wistful look in her eye. She’s turned

off her lover, but she can't help that gaze after him. Poor thing!—just like women. And I like that saffron robe; but I think you might mend the drawing. I don't quite see how she's got her shoulder. It's not out of joint, is it? You had better send for the surgeon before it goes down to Trafalgar Square."

All these blasts of criticism poor Suffolk received, tant bien que mal, doing his best to seem unmoved. He even suffered the chalk which "that beggar, Constable—a tree painter, by Jove!—a landscape man," he said afterwards, with the fervour of indignation, permitted himself to mark the dimpled elbow of his Saxon maiden. The mists of smoke and the laughter that came out of the room from cheery companions who were lost in these mists, and the system of give and take, which made him prescient of the moment when Spyer and Constable too would be at his mercy, as he was now at theirs, made their comments quite bearable, when one word from the "Sword" would have driven the painter frantic. And to do them justice, it was only the pictures which were in the course of painting on which they were critical. Groups now and then would collect before that picture of the English captive boys in the Forum, which the Academy had hung at the roof, and which had come home accordingly unapplauded and unsold, though later;—but I need not anticipate the course of events. Suffolk's visitors gathered before it, and looked at it with their heads on one side, and pointed out its special qualities to each other, not with the finger, as do the ignorant, but with that peculiar caressing movement of the hand which is common to the craft. "What colour! by Jove, that's a bit of Italian air brought bodily into our fogs;—and the cross light is perfect, sir!" Spyer said, who had just been so hard on his friend's drawing. If they found out faults which the uninstructed eye was slow to see, they discovered beauties too; and then gathered round the fire, and fell into twos and threes, and went back to that same talk of the past and the "old set," in which Laurie had indulged on the previous night. The "old set" varied according to the speakers; with some it was only the fellows at Clipstone Street; but with all the moral was the same; the cheery days and nights, the wild sallies of youthful freedom, the great hopes dwindled into nothing, the many, many fallen by the way, not one half of the crowd seeming to have come safely through the struggles of the beginning. "Poor So-and-so! If ever there was a man who had a real feeling for art, it was he; and as good a fellow"—they added, puffing forth meditative clouds;—and there would be a laugh the next moment over some remembered pranks. Laurie had formed one of many such parties ere now. He, too, had been of the old set: he had his stories to contribute, his momentary sigh to breathe forth along with the fumes of his cigar. But, perhaps, he had never in his amateur days felt so completely belonging to the society in which he

found himself. Sometimes, perhaps, he had laughed a little, and given himself a little shake of half-conscious superiority when he left them, and set out to Kensington Gore as to another world; but Charlotte Street was emphatically the same world, and the esprit de corps was strong in Laurie's heart. "Anch' io pittore," he said to himself as he stood indignant before Suffolk's beautiful picture which had been hung up at the roof. It was a beautiful picture; and one of these days the Hanging Committee might treat himself in the same way; and if by chance criticism should really be so effectual as everybody said, why should not something be done for Suffolk,—using the devil's tools, as it were, to do a good action,—by means of Slasher and the "Sword?"

The majority of the young men went away after an hour's talk and smoke unlimited; but Laurie was one of those who remained and went down to supper, along with Spyer and Constable, to the back room down-stairs, which was the little dining-room. Mrs. Suffolk was very careful to keep the folding-doors shut, and to make two rooms, though it certainly would have been larger and might have been more comfortable had they been thrown into one. It was Mrs. Spyer who was her companion that evening, who was older than she, and commented a little sharply on this poor little bit of pretension, as Laurie walked part of the way home with the pair. "I like nice dining and drawing rooms as well as any one," Mrs. Spyer said, "but if I were Helen, I would be comfortable, and never mind." "All the same she is a good little woman," her husband had said, irrelevantly;—for, to be sure, nobody doubted that she was a good little woman. They had cold beef and celery and cheese on the table, and refreshed themselves with copious draughts of beer. I do not say it was a very refined conclusion to the evening, but I think Laurie was better amused and more interested than after many a fine party. He walked home with Spyer, talking of Suffolk's picture, and the injustice that had been done him, *jettant feu et flamme*, as they mentioned the Academy, yet hoping that band of tyrants could not be so foolish two years running. "The thing is, to have him written up in the papers," Spyer said; "a fellow of his talent cannot be long kept in the background; but if the papers were to take him up, it would shorten his probation." "I hate the papers," said Mrs. Spyer. "Why don't we have private patrons, as we used to have, and never mind the public? To think of a wretched newspaper deciding a man's fate! I would not give in to it for a day."

"But we must give in to it, or else be left behind in the race," said her husband. And Laurie thought more and more, as he listened to all this talk, of the influence he himself might exercise at the club and elsewhere upon Slasher and the "Sword."

CHAPTER XX.

LAURIE'S WORK.

THE first grand question to be decided, when Laurie settled in Charlotte Street, was what his first picture was to be. It is true that Mr. Welby, and even the padrona who was so much more hopeful, were all for mere study and life-schools, and the lectures at the Academy, and anatomical demonstrations, and other disagreeable things, which Laurie, always amiable, gave in to, to please them, not doubting of the advantage of the studies in question. But still his anatomy, and his notes, and studies from the life, however careful, were only means to an end; and there was no reason why the end itself should not be pursued at the same time,—or at least so he thought. He had painted pictures before now as a mere amateur, and in that capacity had even,—once,—obtained a nook in the Academy's exhibition; and why he should now suspend his chief work, and, having become a professional painter, paint no longer, was what Laurie could not perceive. He was not the man to exhibit his study of the Norman fisherwoman or Italian peasant who might chance to be posing at the school, as some of the Clipstone Street fellows did. His work there, of course, would help him in his real work at home; but to spend his entire time in preparation for work, and do nothing, seemed to Laurie plain idiocy. "I painted nothing for three years on end when I was like you," old Welby said. "You require to be a painter, sir, before you can paint a picture; and it is hard enough work to make yourself a painter. If I were in your place I'd never look at a canvas bigger than that for at least a year."

"That" was a study of a head which Laurie had taken down with him to Mr. Welby's studio. It was one of the padrona's, and the old painter had praised the sketch. As for Laurie, he turned it hastily with its face to the easel, and laughed the uneasy laugh of embarrassment and offence.

"I rather flattered myself I was a painter," he said, and then paused and recovered his temper. "The fact is, I must keep myself up," he exclaimed; "I must feel as if I were doing something. So long as I paint merely scraps I feel myself demoralised. And then you forget I am not a novice," Laurie said, with some pride. He had been all over Italy, and had studied in Rome, and was very learned in many artistic matters. To be told that he had first to make himself a painter was rather hard.

"Of course you are a novice," said the R.A., "and quite natural too. I don't want to be disagreeable, my dear fellow, but an amateur is really worse,—you may take my word for it,—than an absolute beginner. The very traditions of amateur art are different. If you

were making a fair start I should know exactly what to tell you; but how can I tell how much you may have to unlearn?"

This, it will be allowed, was not encouraging. Laurie went upstairs afterwards three steps at a time, with his blood boiling in his veins. He gave the padrona an animated little address about old fogies in general, and R.A.'s in particular, to her extreme amazement, as she stood at her work. It was a crisp, sunny, wintry morning, and Mrs. Severn was very busy. She opened her brown eyes and laughed, as Laurie, breathless, came to an end.

"They will be giving advice," she said, "I know; and advice, unless when it is just what one wants, is a terrible nuisance. I see exactly what you mean."

"I have no objection to advice," said Laurie, half angry, half laughing, "when it is kept within due limits; but there is such a thing as going too far." And then he told her the extent of Mr. Welby's sin, not without a momentary thought gleaming through his mind as he spoke, that it was the fresh new life which the old painter objected to see coming within the exclusive boundaries of the profession. "Art is like any other trade," he said, as he concluded his tale;—"the workmen are bent on pursuing their mystery, and would like to stone away any interloper who inclines to come in."

Mrs. Severn said nothing for a minute or two, but went on working at her easel with her back to him; and when one is eager and excited to start with, there is nothing more exasperating than to have one's warm and one-sided statement received thus with chilling silence. It is the surest way to fill up what is wanting of the cup of indignation. "You say nothing," Laurie continued, with impatience, "and yet, of course, you must have suffered from it yourself."

"You will think I am helping to bar the door of my trade," said the padrona, "and I know I deserve that you should fly through the window or through the ceiling in wrath; but I can't help it. He was quite right. You have all your amateur habits to break yourself of, and to get to work like,—like,—one of us. Don't be vexed. I have wanted to say it before, and, of course, with the generosity of my kind, I say it now when you are down."

"You too!" Laurie said with a pang. He took two or three turns up and down the painting-room before he could speak. And but for pride, which would not permit him to show how deep was his mortification, I fear he would have blazed and exploded out of the house; but as soon as he had come to himself, pride, more potent than any better feeling, cleared the cloud from his brow.

"I thought you had a better opinion of me," he said, reproachfully, standing behind the easel and casting pathetic glances at her. "I came to you to be,—consoled, I suppose,—like an ass. I thought I was already something of a painter,—at least to you,—or why should

I be encouraged to attempt anything? Why didn't you say to me, 'Go and be a shoemaker?'—as, indeed, Welby was honest enough to do."

"Now, Laurie, don't be unjust," said the padrona. "Don't you see it is because I expect you to do something worth while that I want you to study hard and learn everything? What is a year's work to you at your age? When one gets old one would give everything for the chance of such a preparation. What am I but an amateur myself, not half instructed as I ought to be? And that is why I am so anxious that it should be different with you,—at your age."

"I cannot see what my age has to do with it," said Laurie, "nor why you should always want to set me down as a boy;" and then he paused and compunction overtook him. He went up to his adviser, in the coaxing way which Laurie had been master of all his life. He could not take her hand, for she had her brush in it and was working all the time; but he took the wide sleeve of her painting-dress between his fingers and caressed it, which came to much the same thing. "You are so good to me," he said,—"always so kind and so good. I never thought you would be against me too."

Thus it will be seen that to be advised and even ill-used and trodden upon by a friend who is a woman, and not uncomely to look at, is on the whole less disagreeable than to be snubbed by an ancient R.A.

The padrona laughed, but her eye melted into loving-kindness as well as laughter. "You are a boy," she said, "and a very insinuating one into the bargain. But I am not going to be coaxed out of my opinion. You ought to go home this very minute and lock up all your canvases and take to chalk and paper and pencils for a whole year; and then you can come back to me and I will tell you what I think you should do."

"If I am not to come back for a whole year I may as well go and hang myself at once," said Laurie; and so the talk fell into lighter channels. The truth was that he spent a great deal more time than he had any call to do in the padrona's studio, and hindered, or did his best to hinder, her work; and perhaps liked better to examine her sketches and criticise them, and make suggestions thereupon, than to labour steadily, as he ought to have been doing, at sketches of his own. But this had not yet lasted long enough to attract anybody's attention,—even hers or his own; for, of course, after such a shock as his life had sustained, this was still an unsettled moment. He had not shaken himself down yet, nor found his standing-ground after the convulsion; and it was natural he should seek the counsel of his friends.

But the result was, after these conversations,—the one more discouraging than the other,—that Laurie went direct to his colourman's and chose himself a lovely milk-white canvas six feet by ten, and had

it sent home immediately, and went on his knees before it in silent adoration. His imagination set to work upon it immediately, though he was self-denying enough not to touch it for days; but undeniably that very night there were various sketches made of a heroic character before he went to bed. It was difficult to choose a subject,—much more difficult than he supposed. Several great historical events which struck his fancy had to be rejected as demanding an amount of labour which in the meantime was impracticable. He wandered in a range of contending fancies all night long in his sleep, with Suffolk's Saxon maiden in the doorway of her father's grange, dismissing the Norman squire who had become her lover, floating through his brain in conjunction with various Shakspearian scenes, and some of the padrona's baby groups, with the padrona herself in the midst; and when he woke the dream continued. Sometimes he thought he would abandon history and paint a Mary with that face,—not a girl Mary in the simplicity of youth, but one with thoughts matured, and the wider, greater heart of experience and ripe womanhood. Foolish boy! For, to be sure, he was a boy after all.

It took Laurie a long time to decide this matter in a satisfactory way. One day his inclinations were scriptural, and another historical; and on the third he would have made up his mind to a modern genre picture, but for the size of his canvas, which was clearly intended for something heroic. He settled at last,—which indeed was almost a matter of course,—upon a very hackneyed and trite subject, being somehow driven to it as he felt by the influence of Suffolk's pictures, which he admired with all a young man's indignant warmth. The subject which he chose was Edith seeking "the body of Harold. "In the lost battle, borne down by the flying." Nothing could well have been more inconsistent with his state of mind, or tastes, or general inclinations. He was not given to melancholy thoughts, neither,—though Laurie was sufficiently fanciful,—had any analogy struck him between his own first beginning of the fight and that end, always so linked with the beginning, of utter loss and overthrow and darkness. It was not any chance gleam of a forecasting, profound imagination, or passionate sense of the fatal chances of the battle, that suggested it to him. Such an idea might have occurred to Suffolk, but it was inconsistent with the very constitution of Laurie's mind. He chose his subject in pure caprice, probably because it was the most unlike of anything he could imagine, to his own tender, friendly, unimpassioned nature. There are moments of youthful ease and hope in which tragedy comes most natural to the cheerful, unforeboding soul; I cannot tell why,—perhaps, as Wordsworth says, out of the very "prodigal excess" of its personal content. Laurie was so absorbed in his subject,—in sketching it out, and putting it on the canvas, and bringing his figures into harmonious composition,—that his Clipstone-Street studies suffered immensely, and he even failed

in the usual frequency of his visits to "the Square." Had he gone there as usual, he would, of course, have betrayed himself, and he was determined that not a word should be said until he could,—with a certain triumph,—the triumph of individual conviction and profound consciousness of what was best for himself over all advice,—invite his counsellors to come and look at what was about to be. So long as this fit of fervour lasted Miss Hadley had nothing to report, except the barricading of his windows from morning till afternoon, as long as the light lasted,—unless, indeed, on foggy days, when the painter would glance out at the sky from his balcony, palette in hand, a dozen times a day, with despair in his face. The padrona thought she had gone too far, and affronted him, and was sorry, and sent him friendly messages, recalling the truant; but Laurie, notwithstanding the yearning of his heart, was true to his grand object. As he stood before the big canvas, putting in those vast, vague outlines of the future picture, it seemed to him that he already saw it "on the line" in the Academy, with the little scene he had already imagined going on below. But by this time he had half forgotten the fine people whose astonishment he had once amused himself by imagining. Kensington Gore had been swept away by the current, and looked like some haunt of his boyhood. What he thought now was chiefly, "They will have changed their opinion by that time." "They," no doubt, included old Welby, who had been so hard on the young painter; but I fear that the special spite of this anticipation was directed against the padrona. What did it matter after all, except, indeed, in the strictest professional point of view, what old Welby thought?

Edith had not got beyond the first chalk outline, when Forrester, Mr. Welby's man, came one morning to Charlotte Street, with a message from his master. Forrester was understood to know nearly as much about art as his master did, and resembled him, as old servants often do,—and I rather think Laurie was secretly glad, now matters had progressed so far, of this means of conveying, in an indirect way, the first news of his rebellion to "the Square." At all events, he sent for him to come up-stairs, awaiting his appearance with a little trepidation. Forrester, however, was not arrogant, as some critics are. He came in with the most bland and patronizing looks, ready, it was evident, to be indulgent to everything. When he had delivered his message, he cast an amiable glance around him. The room was lighted only by the upper light of the middle window, all the rest being carefully closed, and even that amount of daylight was obscured by the shadow of the great canvas which was placed on the easel, where all the rays that were to be had out of a November sky might be concentrated upon it. Forrester was too thoroughly acquainted with the profession of which he was a retainer not to understand at once the meaning of this big shadow, and Laurie in

his anxiety thought or imagined that the critic's lips formed themselves into an involuntary whistle of astonishment, though no sound was audible. But the old servitor of art felt the claims of politeness. Instead of displaying at once his curiosity about the work in hand, he paid his tribute of applause with a grace which his master could scarcely have emulated. "That's a nice sketch, sir," Forrester said, indicating one of the Clipstone-Street studies. "I hope you ain't working too hard now, we see you so little in the Square. I like that effect, Mr. Renton; master would be pleased with that effect."

"I am very glad you think so, Forrester," said artful Laurie, leading his visitor on.

"Master's a little severe, Mr. Renton," said Forrester, "but you young gentlemen take him a deal too much at his word. Bless you, he don't mean half he says. I know he'd be pleased. I call that a very nice drawin', Mr. Renton; better nor many a dealer buys for a picture. I always said, sir, as you was one as would come on."

"I am much obliged to you for your good opinion, Forrester," said Laurie; "it is very kind of you to take so much interest in me."

"I've been among painters all my days," said Forrester. "I sat to Opie, sir, though you wouldn't think it, when I was a lad. I don't know as there is a man living as understands 'em better nor I do. I knows their ways; and if I don't know a picture when I sees one, who should, Mr. Renton? I've been about 'em since I was a lad o' fifteen, and awful fond o' them, like as they was living creatures,—and a man ain't worth much if he don't form no opinion of his own in five-and-forty years. Me and master goes on the same principle. It's the first sketch as he's always mad about. 'Take the big picture and hang it in your big galleries,' he says, 'and give me the sketch with the first fire into it, and the invention.' I've heard him a saying of that scores of times; and them's my sentiments to a tee. But master, he's all for the hantique, and me, I go in for the modern school. There's more natur' in it, to my way of thinking. You've got something on your easel, sir, as looks important," Forrester continued, edging his way with curious looks towards the central object in the room.

"I don't know if I should let you see it," said Laurie; "I have only just begun to put it on the canvas; and you are an alarming critic, Forrester,—as awful as Mr. Welby himself."

"No, sir; no, no," said Forrester, affably; "don't you be frightened; I know how to make allowances for a beginner. We must all make a beginning, bless you, one time or other. Master 'ud'grieve if he see a big canvas like that. He'd say, 'It's just like them boys;' but I ain't one to set a young gentleman down. Encourage the young, and tell your mind to the hold, that's my motto, sir," the old man said, as he placed himself in front of the easel. As for poor Laurie, the fact is that he grew cold with fright and expectation as he watched

the face of the critic. Forrester gave vent to a prolonged Ah! accompanied by a slight expressive shrug when he took his first look of the canvas, and for several moments he made no further observation. To Laurie, standing behind him in suspense, the white chalk shadows seemed to twist and distort themselves, and put all their limbs out of joint, in pure perversity, under this first awful critical gaze.

"If I might make so bold, sir," said Forrester, mildly, "what is the subject of the picture, Mr. Renton?" which was not an encouraging remark.

"Of course I ought to have told you," cried Laurie, very red and hot. "It is an incident after the Battle of Hastings,—Edith looking for the body of Harold. Edith, you know, was——"

"I've seen a many Hediths," said Forrester. "I ought to know. I'm an old stupid, sir, not to have seen what it was; but being as it's in the chalk, and me not having the time to study it as I could wish——. I don't doubt, Mr. Renton, as it's a fine subject. It did ought to be, seeing the many times as it's been took."

"I don't think I have seen it many times," said Laurie, profoundly startled; "I only remember one picture, and that very bad," the young man added hastily. Forrester shook his head.

"Not in the exhibitions, I daresay, sir," said the critic, solemnly; "but there's a many pictures, Mr. Renton, as never get as far as the Academy. Mr. Suffolk, he did it, sir, for one; and young Mr. Warleigh, as has give up art, and gone off a engineering; and Robinson, as has fallen into the portrait line," Forrester continued, counting on his fingers; "and poor Mr. Tinto, as died in Italy; and there's the same subject," the old man added, solemnly, after a pause, "turned with its face again the wall in our battic, as Mr. Severn hisself, sir, did when he was young."

Laurie was overwhelmed. He gazed at the ruthless destroyer of his dreams with a certain terror. "Good heavens, I had no idea!" said the young man growing green with sudden despair. Then, however, his pride came to his aid. "It's a dreadful list," he said; "but, you perceive, as they never came under the public eye, and nobody was the wiser——"

"To be sure, sir—to be sure," said Forrester, with pitying complacency. "A many failures ain't what you may call a reason for your failing as is a new hand. I hope it 'ill be just the contrary; but if you hadn't a begun of it, Mr. Renton,—and being as it's but in the chalk, it ain't to call begun;— couldn't Hedith be a looking out for her lover, sir, of an evening, as young women has a way? I don't suppose there was no difference in them old times. And a bit o' nice sunset, and him a-coming out of it with his shadow in front of him, like. I don't say as the subject's as grand, but it's a deal cheerfuller. And when you come to think of it, Mr. Renton, to hang up all them dead corpses

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and a skeered woman, say, in your dining-room, sir, when it's cheerful as you want to be——"

"Thanks," said Laurie, with a little offence. "I have no doubt you are very judicious, but I am sorry I can't see the matter in the same light. You will give Mr. Welby my compliments, please. I'll be glad to dine with him on Saturday, as he asks me. Perhaps you will be so good as to say nothing—. But no, that's of no consequence," Laurie added, hastily. Of course he was not going to give in. Of course they must know sooner or later what he was doing, and better sooner than later. They might laugh, or sneer, or consider him childish if they pleased; but the moment his picture was hung on the line in the Academy, all that would be changed. So Laurie mounted his high horse. But he did it in a splendid magnanimous sort of way. He smoothed down Forrester's wounded feelings by a "tip," which, indeed, was more than he could afford, and which the old man took with reluctance,—and opened the door for him with his own hands. "Offended! because you tell me how popular my subject has been? Most certainly not! Much obliged to you, on the contrary, Forrester, and very proud of your good opinion," he said, with a most gracious smile and nod, as his critic went away, which Forrester did with a certain satisfaction mingling with his regret.

"It's for his good," the old man said to himself; "and there ain't no way of doing them young fellows good without hurting of their feelings."

Laurie for his part went back to his painting-room, and sat down moodily before his big canvas. It was too ridiculous to care for such a piece of criticism. Forrester;—Mr. Welby's servant!—to think of minding anything that a stupid old fellow in his dotage might venture to say! Laurie laughed what he meant for a mocking laugh, and then bit his lip and called himself a fool. Of course the old rascal had been crammed beforehand and taught what to say; or if not, at least it was no wonder if the servant repeated what the master thought. It was not this picture or that, but every picture that Welby had set his face against. And what a piece of idiocy to show his man, his echo,—the very first beginning,—the most chaotic indication,—such as none but an eye at once keen and indulgent could have made out,—of the great work that was to be! Laurie concluded proudly that nobody was to blame but himself, as he sat down in his first quiver of mortification, half inclined to tear his canvas across, and pitch his chalks to the other end of the room. Then he looked at it, and found his Edith looking down upon him with her tragic eyes,—eyes which to her creator looked tragic and full of awful meaning, though they were but put in in chalk. Perhaps, indeed, it was the chalk that made her divine in her despair, whitely shadowing out of the white canvas, owing everything to the imagination,—a suggestion of horror and frantic grief and misery. What

if it was a common subject! The more common a thing is, the more universal and all-influencing must it be. A tender woman, made sublime by her despair, seeking on a field of battle the body of the man she loved most,—a thing of primitive passion such as must move all humanity. What if it were hackneyed! All the more distinctly would it be apparent which was the touch of the real power which could embody the scene, and which the mere painter of costumed figures. Such were Laurie's thoughts as he sat, discouraged and cast down, before his picture,—poor fellow!—after Forrester's visit. If the man's criticisms had so much effect upon him, what would the master's have had? What could he have said to the padrona had it been she who had come to look at his picture? Then the long array of names which Forrester had quoted came back upon him. In short, poor Laurie had received a downright unexpected blow, and ached and smarted under it, as was natural to a sensitive being loving applause and approbation. He turned his back on Edith for the rest of the day, throwing open his windows, to Miss Hadley's astonishment, the first time for a week, and affording her a dim vision of a figure thrown into an arm-chair by the fire, with a novel. It was the first time since he came to Charlotte Street that he had in broad daylight and cold blood given himself over to such an indulgence. He was disgusted with his work and himself. He had not the heart to go out. He could not go to the Square, where probably by this time they were all laughing over his folly. He read his novel doggedly all the afternoon, in sight of Miss Hadley, who could not tell what to make of it. The light was gone and the day lost before he roused himself, and pitched his book into the farthest corner. His kindly spy could not tell what the perverse young fellow would do next. Probably go and have his dinner, she said to herself; which, indeed, Laurie did; and came home much better, beginning to be able to laugh at Forrester, and snap his fingers at his predecessors. "The more reason it should be done now," he said to himself, "if Suffolk, and Severn, and all those fellows broke down over it." And he suffered a little gleam of self-complacency to steal over his face, and went to work all night at his sketch, to improve and perfect the composition. So that, on the whole, Laurie, though no genius, had that nobler quality of genius which overcomes all criticism and surmounts every discouragement. He had been shut up long enough in silence with his conception. That day, he made up his mind, instead of permitting himself to be ignominiously snubbed by old Forrester, that he would face the world, and carry the sketch which he was completing to the padrona herself.

CHAPTER XXI.

WHAT THEY THOUGHT OF IT IN THE SQUARE.

FORRESTER went back very full of his discovery, and there was a certain solemnity in his manner which made it evident to his master that he had something to tell. When he had delivered Laurie's message about the dinner on Saturday, he paused with a look of meaning. "And glad he'll be of a good dinner, too, sir," the old man said, solemnly, "before all is done."

"I am sorry to hear that, Forrester," said Mr. Welby. "He must have been extravagant; for, after all, though it's a change to him, a man need not starve on two hundred a year."

"It's not now as I'm meaning, sir," said Forrester, with a sigh. "He's been and started in a bad way. For aught I can tell he's as well off as you and me now; but I know what it all comes to, Mr. Welby, when a young man sets himself agoing, and won't hear no advice,—in that way."

"God bless me! you don't mean to say the young fellow has got married?" said Mr. Welby, with agitation; for his interest in Laurie was great.

"No, sir," said Forrester, "worse nor that. Marrying's a lottery, but sometimes a wife's a help. You may shake your head, sir; but sometimes she's a help. It's more nor that; but I won't keep you no longer in misery. That young gentleman, sir, as you take an interest in, and I take an interest in, and the good lady up-stairs, —though he's been well-instructed and had all our advice, and ain't an idiot, not to speak of, in other things,—he's been and took up the Saxon line. I see, with my own eyes, a sketch of that ere blessed Hedith as is always a seeking somebody's body. He's got it stuck up on a big canvas six by ten, sir; you take my word; and you know what that comes to as well as me."

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Welby; and though his emotion took a different form, it was quite as genuine as Forrester's outspoken despair. He took a few turns through his studio, repeating this disclosure to himself. "The Saxon line!" he said with horror. Infatuated boy! When a young man is thus bent on destroying himself, what can anyone do? "You are sure you are making no mistake?" said the R.A.; "it was not some other fellow's canvas that had been left in his place? And what did you say to him? After all the trouble we've taken! I will never interest myself in any young man again," said Mr. Welby, with effusion,— "not if I should live a hundred years!"

"What did I say, sir?" said Forrester. "I told him plain where he was going;—to destruction. I gave him a piece of my mind, sir. I spoke to him that clear as he couldn't make no mistake. I told him

the times and times I've seen it done, and what followed. I counted 'em over to him,—Mr. Suffolk, and young Mr. Warleigh, and——”

“Then you behaved like an ass,” cried the R.A., with indignation. “Suffolk! the cleverest painter he knows. Why there's not a man among us can hold the candle to Suffolk for some things! Why didn't you tell him of Baxter, and Robinson, and Simpson, and half-a-dozen other young fools like himself? Suffolk! A man of genius! I thought you had more sense.”

“He may be a bit of a genius,” said Forrester, standing his ground; “but he don't sell his pictures, and Mr. Renton knows it. He was struck all of a heap, sir, when he'd heard all I'd got to say. I don't approve of the subject, nor I don't approve of the size; but as far as I could judge of the chalk, it wasn't badly put on. I wouldn't say he's a genius, but he's got a way, has Mr. Renton; and always a nice-spoken, civil gentleman, even when he's put out a bit, as he might have been to-day.”

“Pshaw!” said the master; “that means, I suppose, that he did not kick you down-stairs. Foolish boy! after all I said to him. I daresay some of the women have put it into his head to go and distinguish himself. Go up and give my compliments to Mrs. Severn, and I'd like to speak to her if she is not busy; and mind you don't say a word of this. Don't speak of it anywhere. I hope what you've said to him, and what I shall say to him, will bring him to his senses. Don't say a word about it to any soul.”

“I've been trusted with greater secrets,” said Forrester, with dignity. “He'll tell her, sir, as fast as look at her; and he'll build more on her advice, though she don't know half nor a quarter. I'm a going, sir. He thinks a deal more of what she says than of either you or me.”

“Insufferable old bore!” Mr. Welby said to himself. “Outrageous young ass! It must be those silly women that have bidden him go and distinguish himself. And what have I got to do with it, I'd like to know?” The truth was the Academician had begun to take a greater interest in Laurie than was consistent with his principles; and he wanted to blame somebody for his favourite's rebellion. He put down his palette, for he was at work at the moment, and washed his hands, and prepared for the interview he had asked. Perhaps Mr. Welby was doubly ceremonious as a kind of protest against the ease with which other members of the profession penetrated into the padrona's studio.

“A lady is a lady, however she may be occupied,” the old man said. And, in accordance with this principle, Forrester's mien and voice were very solemn when he made his appearance up-stairs. “Master's compliments, ma'am, and if you're not busy he'd like to speak to you,” he said, standing ceremoniously at the door.

“Mr. Welby, Forrester?” said the padrona. “Oh, surely; I shall

be glad to see him. I hope there's nothing the matter. Come in and tell me what you think of this. I hope there's nothing wrong."

"No, ma'am; not as I knows of," said Forrester, with profound gravity. "I don't know what else could be thought of it, but that it's a sweet little bit of colour, ma'am. You never done nothing finer nor that flesh. It's breathing, that is. Miss Alice called me in to have a look at it before you came down."

"Miss Alice is always an early bird," said the padrona, pleased. "I'm glad you like it, Forrester; but I don't think I've got the light quite right here. Tell Mr. Welby I shall be glad to see him; but you look horribly grave, all the same, as if something had gone wrong."

"No, ma'am, nothing," said Forrester, with a glance over his shoulder;—"only about Mr. Renton, as we're afraid is in a bad way."

"Good heavens! Laurie! What is the matter with him?" cried Mrs. Severn. The old man shook his head in the most tragical and desponding way.

"Master will tell you himself, ma'am," Forrester said, withdrawing suddenly out of temptation and closing the door behind him. The padrona did not know what to think. Laurie had not been visible for a week at least in the Square; but even a young man, with all the proclivities towards mischief common to that animal, cannot go very far wrong in a week. She too prepared for the impending interview, as Mr. Welby was doing. She put away all her working materials, and set the big Louis Quinze fauteuil near the fire for her visitor. She even went so far as to put a sketching block on the table, and sat down before it with a pencil in her hand, posing half consciously, as an amateur might have posed. The padrona, though she was not timid in general, was a little afraid of her tenant. If she left her picture on the easel it was because there was no time to get it comfortably smuggled away, and some inarticulate beginning placed in its stead. She turned the Louis Quinze, however, with its back to the easel by way of security. A word of approbation from old Welby was worth gold; but yet the risk of obtaining it was one Mrs. Severn did not care to run.

A few minutes after he tapped at the door, and came in, taking off the velvet cap which,—as he knew very well,—had such a picturesque effect on his white hair. The moment he entered the room the padrona saw how vain had been her precaution in turning the Louis Quinze chair. He glanced round him with the quick artist-eye which sees everything, and went up to the easel of course as politeness required, and delivered his little speech of courteous applause, under which Mrs. Severn discovered not a word of criticism, such as her usual visitors threw about so lightly. "I don't think I have got the light quite

right here," she said, as she had said to Forrester,—but with alarm in her face. "Indeed, I don't see what there is to find fault with," Mr. Welby answered, with his old-fashioned bow. Nothing could be more sweet or more unsatisfactory. The padrona almost forgot poor Laurie, as with a flush of vexation on her face she indicated to her visitor the Louis Quinze chair.

"I hope you are not over-exerting yourself, my dear madam," the old painter said. "I am struck dumb by your energy. Where I produce one little picture you exhibit half a dozen. I admire, but I fear; and, if you will let an old man say so, you must take care not to overwork your brain."

Tears sprang to the padrona's eyes; but she kept them fixed steadily on her block, so that the old cynic, who, no doubt, knew all the commonplaces about women's tears, should not see them. She said, with all the composure she was mistress of,—*"You and I are very different, Mr. Welby. Your one picture, of course, is more than worth my half dozen; but one must do what one can."*

"No one knows better than I what Mrs. Severn can do," said the R.A., with one of those smiles for which the padrona could have strangled him. "I was but taking the privilege of my age to warn you against overwork,—which is the grand disease of these times, and kills more people than cholera does. Pardon me. I want to speak to you about young Renton, in whom I know you take an interest. I advised him," Mr. Welby said, slowly, "to give up all idea of producing anything for the moment, and to devote himself to preparatory work,—hard work."

"So he told me," said the padrona, with a little spirit; for there was no mistaking the implied blame in old Welby's tone. "And so I told him, too."

"Then somebody has been undermining us, my dear madam," said the R.A. "Somebody has been egging up the foolish boy to make a name for himself, and win fame, and so forth. Forrester brings me word that he has begun a great picture. High art, life-size, Edith finding the body of Harold. The young fellow must be mad."

"Edith finding the body of Harold!" repeated Mrs. Severn, bewildered;—and then, what with her personal agitation, what with the curious anti-climax of this announcement after her fears about Laurie, the padrona, we are obliged to confess, burst into a sudden fit of nervous laughter. She laughed till the tears came into her eyes; and, to be sure, old Welby had no way of knowing how near to the surface were those tears before."

"I confess I do not see the joke," he said, slowly. "Of course I have nothing to do with the boy. If he goes and makes a fool of himself, like so many others, it is nothing to me. Indeed, I don't know who advised him to come here, where one can't help seeing

what he's about. He would have been a great deal better, and out of one's way, had he stayed at Kensington Gore."

"He was paying four guineas a week for his rooms at Kensington Gore," said the padrona, meekly. "It was I who advised him to come to Charlotte Street. A man cannot live on nothing. If he had given all his income for rent——"

"When I was like him I lived on nothing," said the R.A.; "but young men now-a-days must have their clubs and their luxuries. Why, what education has he had that he should begin to paint pictures? A few lines scratched on a bit of paper, or dabs of paint on a canvas do well enough for an amateur; but, good heavens, a painter! You don't see it, ma'am; you don't see it! Women never do. You think it's all genius, and nonsense. You will tell me it's genius that makes a Michael Angelo, I suppose; but, I tell you, it's hard work."

"I do see it," said the padrona. "Sit down, please, and don't be angry with me. I see it very well; but I can't help laughing all the same. It is Laurie's way. He will never be a Michael Angelo. It is so like him to go and set up a great picture to surprise us. One of these days, if you take no notice, he will come like Innocence itself, and invite us to go and look at it. I was afraid something was wrong with him; but this quite explains why he stayed away."

"And that is all a woman cares for!" said Mr. Welby. "The boy's quite well, and his absence accounted for; and what does it matter if he makes an ass of himself?" Here the painter rose, and made a little giro round the room, pausing at the easel with a certain vindictiveness. "I wouldn't give much for that baby's chances of life," he said. "The creature will be a cripple if it grows up. It has no joints to its legs; and that little girl's got her shoulder out. There's where the elbow should come," he went on, making an imaginary line in the air. It was the same picture he had made a pretty speech about when he came into the room, from which it may be perceived that Mrs. Severn's terror of her lodger's visit was not without cause.

"I shall be so glad if you tell me what you see wrong," the padrona said, with, I fear, more submission than she felt.

"Wrong, ma'am, it's all wrong!" cried the R.A.; "there's not a line that could not be mended, nor a limb that is quite in its right place;—but I couldn't paint such a picture for my life," Mr. Welby continued, with a sudden melting in his voice; "nor anybody else but yourself. The body's out of drawing, but the soul's divine. Light!—nonsense,—the light's all as it ought to be; the light's in that woman's face. I don't know how to better it. But this is not what we were talking of," he continued, suddenly turning his back on the picture. "We were talking of Laurie Renton. What is to be done about this ridiculous boy?"

The padrona was a little disturbed. She was overwhelmed by the

praise, feeling all the sweetness of it; and she was pricked, and stung to smarting by the blame. It cost her a considerable effort to master herself, and to bring back her thoughts even to Laurie Renton. "You must not be too hard upon him," she said, with her voice a little tremulous. "A mind that has any energy in it must work in its own way." This was said half on Laurie's account, no doubt, but also half on her own, after the assault she had sustained. "I think it would be best not to say too much about his big picture. He will read your disapproval in your eye."

Mr. Welby shrugged his shoulders. "I doubt if a young fellow would take much interest in reading my eye. But he may read yours, perhaps," said the cynic, with a questioning glance, which Mrs. Severn was too much occupied to perceive, much less understand. And this was about the end of the consultation. They might admire and warn, and hold up beacons before the unwary youth, but there is no Act of Parliament forbidding a young painter to purchase for himself canvases six feet by ten, and to paint, or attempt to paint, heroic pictures thereupon. His advisers might regret and might do their best to turn him to wiser ways, but that was all; and the question was not urgent enough to demand the sacrifice of the very best hours of a November day,—which, heaven knows! are short enough for a painter's requirements, in a district so rapidly reached by the rising fog from the city as Fitzroy Square.

It was the evening of the next day before Laurie carried out his resolution. With a little impatience he waited till it was dark, or nearly so, and then, with his sketch under his arm, went round the corner to the Square. To carry a portfolio or a picture under your arm is nothing wonderful in these regions; and I think it was something of a foppery on Laurie's part to wait till the twilight; but, on the whole, it was rather Mr. Welby and old Forrester he was afraid of than the general public. The padrona was,—as he knew she would be,—in her dining-room, sitting in the fire-light, with a heap of little scorched, shining faces about her, when he went in. One good thing of these short winter days was, that the woman-painter had a special hour in which it was impossible to do anything, and a perfectly legitimate indulgence to play with the little ones to her heart's content. They were all upon her,—little Edie seated on her mother's lap, with her arms closely clasped round her neck, and the boys on either side embracing her shoulders. "She is my mamma," said little Edie; "go away, you boys." "She is my mamma as well," said Frank and Harry, with one voice. They could not see Laurie as he came in softly into the ruddy, warm, homelike darkness, nor hear the voice of the maid who opened the door for him; and Laurie, soft-hearted as he was, lingered over this little glimpse of those most intimate delights with which neither he nor any other stranger could intermeddle. When he saw the mother with her children,—who were all

hers, and in whom no one else had any share,—the helpless, hopeful, joyous creatures, encircled by the woman's soft, strong arms, which were all the protection, all the shelter they had in this world,—his heart melted within him, the foolish fellow! Alice sat at her piano in the drawing-room, playing the soft dream-music which was natural to the hour; and to her, had he been like other young men, Laurie's thoughts and steps would naturally have turned; instead of which he stood gazing at her mother, who at that moment no more remembered him than if there had been no such being in existence. Laurie's heart melted so that he could have gone and sat down on the hearth-rug at her feet, as one of the boys did, had he dared, and asked her to let him help her and stand by her. Help her in what? Laurie gave no answer to his own question; and, to be sure, he could not stand there in the dark for more than a minute spying upon the fireside hour. He put down his sketch on a side-table with a little noise, which made the padrona start. "I am not a ghost," said Laurie, coming into the warmer circle of the firelight. "Then you should not behave as such," Mrs. Severn said, holding out her hand to him with a smile; and then the mere accident of the moment brought him beside little Frank on the hearth-rug, as he had thought, with a little sentimental impulse, of placing himself. He sat down on the child's stool, and held out his hands to the fire, and looked up at the padrona's face, which shone out in glimpses by the cheerful firelight. Sometimes little Edith, with her wreath of hair, would come between him and her mother like a little golden, rose-tinted cloud; sometimes the fitful blaze would decline for a moment, and throw the whole scene into darkness. But Mrs. Severn did not change her attitude, or put down the child from her lap, or ring for the lamp, on Laurie's arrival. He came in without breaking the spell,—without disturbing the calm of the moment. And after an absence of more than a week, and some days' work and seclusion, it is not wonderful if he felt as if he had suddenly come home.

"This would not be a bad opportunity to lecture you, as I am going to do," said the padrona. "He has been very naughty, children; he ought to be put in the corner. Let us make up our minds what we will do to him, now we have him here."

"Give him some bad suns to do, mamma," said little Harry, whose life was made a burden to him in that way; "or make him write out fifty lines; and don't tell him any stories. What have you done, Mr. Renton? I want to know."

"Give him a bad mark in the pantomime-book," said Frank. Now, the pantomime-book was a ledger of the severest penalties; the bad marks disabled a sinner altogether from the enjoyment of the highest of pleasures, and was as good as a pantomime lost. The savage suggestion awoke the sympathy of little Edie on her mother's knee.

"What has he done?" said Edie. "Poor Laurie! But mamma won't listen to these cruel boys. Mamma listens to me. I am the little princess in the new picture. Mamma, I love Laurie. Make him go down on his knees and beg pardon, and I know he will never do it any more."

"I will never do it any more," said Laurie, with one knee upon the hearth-rug. There was something in the soft, genial warmth, the kindly, flickering light, the touches of the children, and their sweet, ringing tones,—the face of their mother now and then shining upon him, and her voice coming out of the shadow,—which captivated him in some unintelligible way. There was no romance in the matter, certainly. She was years older than he was, and thought of him as his grandmother might have thought. But Laurie Renton was that kind of man. His heart was full of tenderness and sympathy, and a certain sense of the pathos of the situation which did not strike the chief actors in it. Mrs. Severn felt herself a happy woman,—notwithstanding all that had befallen her,—when she sat down by her fire, and felt the soft pressure of those soft, baby-arms; but to Laurie there was a pathos in it which brought the tears to his eyes. "I will never do it any more," he said; "I will do whatever mamma tells me. I will be her servant if she will let me." Perhaps it was well for Laurie that the children immediately burst into a chorus of laughter and jubilation over his proposal. "He will be our Forrester, and do everything we tell him," cried the boys; and the padrona, carried away by their delight, thought nothing of the bended knee nor the unnecessary fervour of submission. I doubt even if she heard very clearly what he said, or was the least aware of his attitude; but probably instinct warned her that there was enough of this. She rang the bell, which was close to her hand, without saying anything. After all, the firelight and the hearth-rug were only for the children and herself. And I think Laurie even was a little ashamed of his temporary intoxication when the lamp came in, carried by the maid, bringing back the light of common evening,—the clear outlines of prose and matter-of-fact.

It was not till after tea that he brought his sketch to exhibit it. The children had gone up-stairs, and Miss Hadley had returned home, and no evening visitor had as yet arrived. When Laurie was left alone with the padrona, she laid down her needlework and lifted up her eyes to him, beaming with a kindly light. "I have something serious to say to you now," she said. "I have been hearing dreadful things about you. You have not taken our advice."

"Our advice! I don't know what that means," said Laurie. "There is but one padrona in the world, and her advice I always take."

"Do not be hypocritical," said Mrs. Severn. "You promised to paint no pictures, but to be busy and study and do your work; and

here you have set up an Edith as big as Reginald Suffolk's, and you call that taking my advice."

"Here she is," said Laurie, producing his sketch. He placed it on the table, propped up against the open workbox, and took the lamp in his hand that the light might fall on it as it ought. He did not defend himself. "I kept away as long as I could, meaning not to tell you yet; but that did not answer," said Laurie; "and here she is."

The padrona put away her work out of her hands, and gave all her attention to the new object thus placed before her; and whatever might be the qualities of Edith, the group thus formed was pictorial enough;—the room all brightness and warmth, centering in the pure light of the lamp which Laurie held up in his hand; the fair, ample, seated figure gazing earnestly at the little picture, with her own face partially in the shade,—behind her the open doors of the larger room, dark, but warm, with a redness in it of the fire, and a pale gleam from the curtained windows. But the actors in this still interior were unconscious of its effect. She was looking intently at the sketch, and he, pausing to hear what she should say of it, holding his breath.

"Put down the lamp," said the padrona after a pause, "it is too heavy to hold, and I can see. And sit down here till I speak to you. You have not taken our advice."

"I understand," said Laurie, and his lip quivered a little, poor fellow! "That means I may take away the rubbish. You need not say any more, for it will pain you. I understand."

"You don't understand anything about it," said Mrs. Severn, putting out her hand to retain the sketch where it was. "Let me say out my say. I don't want to like it. I wish I could say it was very bad. If it had been atrocious it would have been better for you, you rash boy! But I must not tell any fibs. I like the sketch; there is something in it. I can't tell how you should know about that woman, expecting every moment to see—— Yes, put her away, Laurie, for a little; her eyes have gone to my heart."

Laurie put down his creation upon the table with a face all glowing with pride and delight. "I hoped you would like it," he said; "but that it should move you,——" and in his gratitude he would have kissed the hand of the friend to whose counsel he owed so much. As for the padrona, she withdrew her hand quickly, with a momentary look of surprise.

"But I have more to say," she went on. "You must wait till you have heard me out. Don't be vexed or disappointed. I doubt if you will ever make any more of her. Now don't speak. I will say to you what I have never said to anyone. How many sketches like that have I seen in my life, full of talent, full of meaning! It is not a sketch;—it is all the picture you will paint of that subject. I

know what I am saying. She who is so real in that, with her awful expectations, will be staring like a woman on the stage in the big picture. I know it, Laurie. I have seen such things, over and over again."

Laurie said nothing. He saw her eyes, which were still fixed on his sketch, suddenly brim over, quite silently, in two big drops, which fell at Edith's feet. Mortification, disappointment, and, at the same time, a kind of consolatory feeling took possession of him. The downfall was great from the first flush of joy in her approbation; but yet— Clearly it was of poor Severn she was thinking. Poor Severn, of whom it was certainly the fact that he never did anything good except in sketches. Laurie's heart rose magnanimous at this thought. If that was all, how soon he could prove to her that he was a different man from poor Severn! "It is not worth a tear," he said; "never mind it. I ought to have known that it would bring things to your mind——"

"It is not that," said the padrona, recovering herself; "it is because I am anxious you should not waste your strength. Put it up again where it can be seen, or, rather, bring it into the other room, where there is a better place. Take the lamp, and I will take the picture. I like it," she said, as she followed him into the larger drawing-room. "Let it stand here, where it can be seen. And I will send for Mr. Welby if he is at home. I like it very much;—but I don't want you to paint the big picture all the same."

"If you like it, that is reason enough why I should paint the big picture," said Laurie. If the padrona discerned the touch of tender enthusiasm in his tone, she took no notice whatever of it, but busied herself placing the sketch in the most favourable light.

"Mr. Welby came up-stairs, and insulted me, all on your account," she said, with a laugh. "Oh, don't look furious. I don't want any one to fight my battles. But it is cruel of him, all the same. He congratulated me on my energy, and on sending six pictures to the Exhibitions where he sent one. It was very ill-natured of him,—a man who has had a whole long life to perfect himself, and nothing to hurry him on. Does not he think, I wonder, that even I would like to take time and spare no labour, and paint something that would last and live?" Mrs. Severn said, with a flush coming over her face.

"And so you do, and so they will," said Laurie, carried away by his feelings. The padrona shook her head.

"No," she said, "I don't deceive myself. I get money for my pictures, and that is about what they are worth. But don't you think, Laurie,—you who understand things that are not spoken,—don't you think it sometimes makes my heart sick, to feel that, if I could but wait, if I could but take time, I might do work that would be worth doing,—real work,—one picture, say, that would have a whole soul

in it? But I can't take time: there are the children, and daily bread; and—he taunts me that I paint six pictures for his one!"

"Padrona mia, nothing that could be painted would be half so good as you are," cried Laurie, not knowing in the thrill and pain of sympathy what he said.

"I should like to paint something that would be better than me," said the padrona, "but I cannot. I have to work for their bread,—and you feel for me when I tell you this. And don't you see, don't you see why I bid you work?" cried the artful woman, suddenly turning upon him, standing on her own heart, as it were, to reach him. "There is nothing to urge you into execution, to compel you to exhibit and sell and get money. Why don't you take the good of your blessed leisure, you foolish boy? Never think of the Academy, nor of what you will paint, nor of what people think. Make yourself a painter, Laurie, now that you have your life in your hands, and heaps of time, and nothing to urge you on. But, good heavens! here are people coming," cried Mrs. Severn,—“to find me flushed and half crying over all this, I declare. Talk to them till I come back, and I will send down the child to help you; and don't forget what I've been saying," she said, as she rushed out of the room.

This assault had been so sudden, so trenchant, so effective;—he had been led so artfully to the softness of real feeling, in order to have the thrust made at his most unguarded moment, that Laurie stood confused when his Mentor left him, not quite sure where he was, or what had happened. Had it been any stranger who had appeared, Mrs. Severn's young friend would have made a poor impression upon her visitor; but, happily, it was Alice who came in,—Alice with her curls,—harmonious spirit, setting the house to music, as her mother said. This was all poor Laurie made by his honesty in carrying his Edith, in her earliest conception, for the approval of the Square.

THE FORTUNES OF THE EMPIRE.

SOME five or six years ago, the streets of Paris were placarded over with the words "*Un grand peuple qui se réveille.*" Such was the title of a work on the struggle between North and South in the United States, which had a considerable success in France at the time, and which was, we think, translated into English under the name of "*The Uprising of a great People.*" Of the book itself we know nothing, but its title has been constantly recalled to our mind of late, while we have watched the course of public affairs across the Channel. Whatever the future may have in store for France, whatever judgment may be passed on the prospects of the Empire, this much at least must be granted, that there is now going on in France a national awakening. There is an end for the time of the lethargy, the indifference to politics, the engrossment in material cares, which characterised the earlier years of the Second Empire. To persons whose faith in freedom was at once keen and sincere there were few spectacles more painful than the indifference and even the contentment with which the French nation bore for so long the loss of liberty. And the painfulness of the spectacle was increased the more the spectator became convinced that this apathy was not feigned but real. By an unfortunate combination of circumstances, it has so happened that almost all the Englishmen who of late years have taken an interest in French politics have derived that information and drawn their impressions exclusively from the partizans either of the Republic or of the House of Orleans. Now it was the cue,—we use the word in no offensive sense,—of both Orleanists and Republicans to represent the French nation as groaning beneath an intolerable tyranny, as held down by force, as anxious above all things to overthrow the existing Government. Nothing was more distasteful to the exponents of this view than the acknowledgment, even to their own minds that the great mass of their countrymen were on the whole well satisfied with the Imperial régime; and, in consequence, the English critics of French affairs, who took their views, second-hand, from Republican or Orleanist coteries, were perpetually thrown out of their calculations by their inability to realise the simple fact that Frenchmen, as a body, were tolerably well-satisfied with the system of government inaugurated by the *coup d'état*. Yet an appreciation of this truth is absolutely essential to any understanding of the present condition of France. It is true, as we believe, that the French

nation has at last awoke from its long slumbers; but the significance of this awakening can only be estimated at its true value by realising the profoundness of the torpor which preceded it.

Few things are more difficult to explain than the state of mind of a large community; and the exigencies of space would alone preclude our attempting any elaborate disquisition on the causes which induced France to accept, if not to condone, the 2nd of December and the consequences which followed logically from its acceptance. But in order to make our view of the present condition of France at all intelligible to our readers, it is necessary to explain as briefly as we may how the past stood according to our reading of contemporary events. Whether the Government of July deserved the fate which befell it, is a question on which we need not enter. All we desire is, that those who follow our argument should disabuse themselves of the impression so commonly held in England that the reign of the citizen king is a period looked back upon by the France of 1848, and still more by the France of 1869, with any feeling of fond regret. It may be a fair ground of complaint against the French nation that they failed to appreciate the benefits of the peculiar form of Parliamentary Government with which the name of Louis-Philippe is associated. But, as a matter of fact, the Orleanist régime not only failed to excite any popular enthusiasm in France, but it actually rendered the name of Parliamentary Government distasteful for a time to the mass of the French people. The revolution of 1848 was undoubtedly the result of accident,—the work of a small minority. But the great majority, though averse to the idea of a revolution, and terrified at the name of a republic, witnessed the overthrow of the Orleanist monarchy with absolute unconcern, if not with positive satisfaction. Then came the era of the Republic of February. We incline, ourselves, to the belief that the Republic has much fewer sins to answer for than are commonly ascribed to it. But, justly or unjustly, it excited the utmost apprehension throughout France, and was regarded by a generation, to whom the Reign of Terror was scarcely yet a tradition only, as the precursor of an epoch of anarchy and mob-law. The time was not ripe for a republican régime; and when the "Reds" received an overwhelming defeat at the hands of the "Garde Mobile," in the days of June, the Government, under which such a conflict between order and anarchy had become possible, had received its death-blow. The election of Louis Napoleon as Prince President was in reality neither more nor less than a protest against the Republic on the part of the nation.

It is certainly not our intention to enter on any justification of the coup d'état. But we think it must be fairly owned, that during the years which elapsed between the downfall of the Provisional Government and the establishment of the Empire, the main desire of the French was to get rid of the Republic, or, perhaps, more truly speak-

ing, of the socialist reign, of which the Republic was deemed the precursor. That this desire was manifested in the peculiar form of Imperialism was due partly to the "culte Napoléonienne," which had so long found favour in France, partly to the fact that the then representative of the Napoleons was a man of singular ambition, energy, ability, and daring. When the "hour and the man" are forthcoming, it is well nigh impossible to determine how much is due to the hour, how much to the man. But the two conditions are equally requisite to the solution of the problem; and it must be owned that if the Second Empire could not have been established but for the accident of Louis Napoleon's possession of supreme power as President of the Republic, yet, on the other hand, Louis Napoleon would never have succeeded in his coup d'état if the nation had not been ripe for the Empire. What France wanted in 1849, and on to 1851, was a strong Government, whose existence would be a guarantee against the recurrence of such civil conflicts as those of the days of June. The Republic had been tried, and in popular estimation found wanting; the Orleanist monarchy, which was identified with parliamentary government, had failed to protect order, and had left behind evil memories of discontent and national humiliation; while the first Empire had sustained a sort of historical rehabilitation, and had become associated in men's minds with an era of national grandeur. Thus, when the coup d'état overthrew the Republic and substituted the Empire in its stead, the revolution, to say the least, encountered no national resistance. To some extent this has always been so in France. In no other country is the old legal adage, "*Quod fieri non debet, factum valet*," accepted more freely or acted upon more loyally. But the adhesion which the French nation gave to the Empire after the coup d'état was of a very different kind from that accorded to the monarch of July, after the "three glorious days," or to the Republic, after the revolution of February. The title which Napoleon III. is so fond of claiming, that of the Elect of Eight Millions, had far more foundation in fact than Englishmen at the time were prepared to admit. The illegality and injustice of the usurpation are not condoned through the act of indemnity passed by the nation at the Plebiscite; but the fact of this indemnity having been given so readily does account in no small degree for the success which attended the first inauguration of the Imperial rule.

Of late, it has been the fashion amidst the partizans of the Empire, to describe the Constitution of 1852 as a provisional scheme, never designed to be anything beyond a makeshift. This assumption, though convenient at the present moment, is, we think, unjust to the author of the Second Empire. It is impossible to study the Constitution which was given to France immediately after the overthrow of the Republic, without perceiving that it was based upon a principle, false if you choose, but still intelligible and definite. That principle

was the permanent superiority of Personal to Representative Government. The Emperor was to wield the whole executive power of the Government. He was to make war and peace, to conclude treaties, to appoint his own ministers, to prepare his own laws, without the control either of Parliament or of the Press. According to the theory of Imperialism, he having been elected by universal suffrage, was the embodiment,—the incarnation, so to say,—of the nation, and therefore all restrictions on his authority, were in reality restrictions on the authority of the nation. The Senate, whose members owed their rank to the nomination of the Emperor, were not intended to exercise any control over the sovereign's freedom of action, but were designed to invest his decrees with the authority derived from the sanction of an assembly of notabilities. The Chamber of Deputies was studiously debarred from any independent legislative power. No subject could be discussed in the popular branch of the Legislature without the previous sanction of the Government. No bill could be proposed, no amendment could be introduced into any measure laid before the House, no ministerial explanation could be called for, as the Ministers were not allowed to attend the debates or appear before the Chambers; and even the Budget, the one matter concerning which the Lower House could exercise any independent judgment, was submitted to it, not for consideration of its various items, but for acceptance or rejection as a whole. It would, however, be a mistake to imagine that the Chambers were intended to be an utterly insignificant body. In the scheme of Imperialism, the Deputies elected by universal suffrage were to express the free opinion of the nation on all matters of public import, and, having expressed their opinion, were to be therewith content. The Emperor, on the other hand, would take this expression of opinion into account, and would shape his action accordingly.

It may be said that even this deliberative independence was rendered impossible by the restrictions placed upon the freedom of debate through the various laws which reduced the Assembly for a time to the condition of the chorus in the grand drama. This is true enough; but these restrictions were professedly, and probably truly, regarded as provisional in their essence. The deportations to Cayenne, the loss of public safety, the regulations by which the Press was reduced to silence, however iniquitous they may have been, were justified, or attempted to be justified, by the plea that the interests of order demanded an absolute interdict on all demonstrations which, in the then agitated state of the public mind, might have retarded the restoration of tranquillity. The excuse was a poor one; and the Empire is now paying the penalty of the unscrupulousness with which it pandered to the panic that prevailed in France towards the latter end of the Republic. Society called loudly for a saviour, and the elect of the nation had not the will, possibly not the power,

to prove that such salvation as France asked for was not to be found in measures of repression.

But,—and this is the point which seems to us, for good and for evil, to be the key to the whole Imperial system,—these coercive remedies, these violent interferences with individual liberty, these abrogations of law, were not in themselves essential parts of the scheme of Government which Napoleon III. introduced into France. The Emperor need not be accredited with any special intelligence by the assumption that he himself regarded the dictatorial régime which was established on the morrow of the coup d'état, as temporary in its duration. No one, not bereft of common sense, could ever have contemplated the possibility of governing France by terrorism, by the imprisonment and exile of all who ventured to protest against the new régime, by the absolute suppression of all public political life. All these things were of their nature transitory; and when the Emperor talked of ultimately crowning the edifice with liberty, he looked forward honestly, as we believe, to a day when it should be in his power to do away with all these drastic remedies, and to let Personal Government stand upon its own merits. Whatever objections there may be in practice, there is no theoretical reason why considerable individual and public freedom should not be enjoyed under the rule of an elected Autocrat, supposing the Autocrat to rule in accordance with the wishes of the majority of the nation, and with their good-will and free consent. Indeed, if the Empire had not been hereditary, and if the plebiscite by which the Emperor was called to supreme power had been renewed from time to time, the Constitution of France, in so far as the power of the sovereign was concerned, would have borne no small resemblance to that of the United States before the war. Unfortunately for the logical perfection of his scheme, Napoleon III. could not reconcile himself to the necessity of future appeals to the popular will, and in order to avoid this necessity a universal fiction was invented, in virtue of which the decision of the nation was assumed to be incapable of change. With the exception of our own constitutional fiction, that the king can do no wrong, there never was a more baseless assumption, than that a nation, having once chosen a sovereign, could never desire to modify its choice. Still, it was upon the cards, that a people, weary of change, might accept the Napoleon dynasty for good and for all. But even had this proved to be the case, the Emperor had, if we judge rightly, no intention in 1852,—we doubt if he has any intention in 1869,—of surrendering the principle of Personal Government. The liberties he has successively granted to France, great as they are, are yet not inconsistent with the cardinal tenet of Cæsarism,—that in the last resort it is Cæsar who governs as well as reigns.

From 1852 to 1860 there followed eight years of an almost unbroken success, and of unbroken quiet. The cause of Self-govern-

ment was discredited; the leaders of the popular cause were in exile; the liberal party was cowed by the stern resolution with which all opposition was crushed down by the Government; and, what was more than important than all, the public spirit of the nation seemed extinct and dead. The Press was silenced, the Chambers were tongue-tied, the freedom of speech was interdicted; and yet the country remained, to all outward semblance, indifferent to the loss of its liberties. It so happened, in addition to the causes to which we have already alluded, that the establishment of the Empire was contemporaneous with an era of unprecedented prosperity,—of extraordinary internal development. The adversaries of the Napoleon dynasty assert that the marvellous progress made by France in the years which followed the coup d'état was only the result of the measures initiated by the Government of July. It may be so; the "*sic vos non nobis*" maxim is so true a one in most mundane affairs, that we are quite prepared to admit the Empire may only have reaped what others had sown. Still, as a fact, France, under Napoleon III., underwent a material regeneration. Englishmen, as a common rule, know France only through Paris; and as Englishmen were, as a body, adverse to the Imperial régime, they reconciled facts to theories by asserting that the provinces were sacrificed to the capital, and that the marvellous transformation of Paris was solely due to exceptional causes. No assumption could be more untrue. The improvements in Paris were equalled in proportion by those in all the provincial towns throughout the Empire. The country was opened up by railroads; trade was set free from the trammels which a protective tariff had imposed upon it; a spirit of speculation and enterprise was infused throughout all classes; and an increased extravagance of private expenditure was at once the cause and the product of an unwonted development of industrial enterprise. Of nations, even more than of individuals, it is true that they cannot live by bread alone; and the result has shown once more that great commercial prosperity cannot reconcile a nation permanently to the loss of political liberty.

But for a time the comparatively novel charm of speculation in stocks and shares did undoubtedly do much to divert the thoughts of Frenchmen from the dependence to which they were reduced. And, moreover, that dependence was for a long period concealed from public view by the glamour of success. During the first few years of the Empire, the Emperor did unquestionably rule much after the fashion in which his subjects wished public affairs to be conducted; and even in the instances where he led, rather than followed public opinion, the chance of fortune justified his decision almost before its wisdom had been disputed. The marriage with the Empress Eugénie, the Crimean war, the treaty of commerce with England, and, above all, the campaign for the liberation of Italy, were all successes, not

only brilliant in themselves, but invested with that theatrical character so dear to the French national mind. It so happened, also, from a combination of circumstances any consideration of which would be foreign to our purpose, that Napoleon III. was for many years the virtual arbiter of European politics, and was regarded abroad, even more than at home, as a ruler of matchless sagacity, and still more matchless fortune. The result of this state of things was that France occupied a position on the Continent such as she had never held since the palmy days of the First Empire; and while the more selfish feelings of the nation were gratified by the increase of her material prosperity, her higher instincts were in some measure appeased by the knowledge that France was feared and respected abroad.

Thus the new system of Personal Government started on its career with many advantages on which it could not justly have reckoned. But even at its brightest fortunes, certain fatal and inherent defects made themselves manifest in the Imperial mechanism. If government, according to the "*Idées Napoléoniennes*," was to be anything different from a dictatorship based on military force, it was essential that the various estates of the realm should discharge the subordinate duties imposed upon them in earnest. The nation was to run in fetters, but it was to run all the same; and if it were possible to secure devotion to the public interests without the bestowal of any independent authority, the nation might have co-operated zealously with the Emperor in his endeavour to rule France as seemed best in his own eyes. Unfortunately, however,—or perhaps we should say fortunately,—the French declined all active participation in the Imperial project. The men who had been statesmen under free governments,—who had played leading parts in the drama of free public life,—naturally held aloof from the new autocratic régime. This was to be expected; but it was hardly to be anticipated beforehand that all the men of reputation, talent, character, and standing should, with scarcely an exception, have refused to take service under the Empire. Under a Personal Government, however carefully the fact may be concealed, the ministers and advisers of the sovereign are, and can be, nothing beyond desks and counters; and it is to the credit of the intellect of France that the rewards of rank and wealth and court favour proved so unavailing to draw recruits of any value to the Imperial ranks. In consequence of the well-nigh universal defection of men of position from his service, Napoleon III. was compelled to select as his ministers men whose reputation added nothing to, if it did not actually detract from, the hold his government exercised over France. This was the first flaw in the Imperial system. The second was the utter indifference of the masses to the discharge of their political duties. Frenchmen, as a body, were willing enough for the time to be governed; they even preferred, it may be, Imperialism to free

institutions ; but they declined to play at being free, or to trouble themselves about electing representatives, who, when elected, could only offer advice. The Emperor was the saviour of society. Well and good ; so he asserted himself ; and so his subjects were half inclined to believe ; but then the saviour must save society himself, and not look for help to others. In slave states it is always a cause of complaint that the slaves cannot be induced to take an intelligent interest in the welfare and prosperity of their masters, and fail to recognise the truth that his loss must be their loss also. What is true of social is true of political servitude ; and men debarred from the exercise of political liberties cannot be expected to trouble themselves about political affairs, over the conduct of which they have no power or direct influence.

So it came to pass that while France increased in wealth at home and power abroad, her people left the whole management of her domestic and foreign policy to the "earthly providence" who ruled over her destinies. Public spirit seemed dead ; the Chambers were filled with nominees of the administration, who voted as they were led with an unanimity to which no parallel can be found in the records of any other freely-elected assembly. The Press eschewed public affairs, and contented itself with chronicling the scandals of the demi-monde ; "society" supplied the place of public interests by unparalleled extravagance and dissipation ; the "bourgeois" class was given up to the pursuit of gain ; the working classes earned high wages, and lived carelessly ; everything, in fact, was for the best in the best possible of worlds ; and Napoleon III. might have repeated Louis XIV.'s boast, "*L'état c'est moi*," with a truthfulness not possessed at the time of the utterance of the saying by the "Grand Monarque" himself.

It was in 1860 that France gave the first indication of awakening from her long torpor ; and it is, to say the least, significative that this awakening should have coincided almost exactly with the first decline of the Imperial fortunes. No Englishman could have lived in France in the years 1859 and 1860 without being aware that the Emperor of the French was then popularly regarded as a man who could somehow command fortune. His run of luck had been so brilliant, that any disappointment or discomfiture was sure to be as much over-estimated as his good fortune had been exaggerated by public repute. The first blow dealt to the Imperial prestige was due to the formation of Italy into an united kingdom, in spite of the avowed wish of the Emperor to limit the aggrandisement of Piedmont to the north of the Apennines ; the second blow was the rebuff which France received at the hands of Russia at the time of the Polish insurrection ; the third was the collapse of the Congress scheme ; the fourth was the ill-fated Mexican expedition, and the enforced withdrawal of the French troops from across the Atlantic at the peremptory

bidding of the United States ; the fifth, and greatest, was the sudden consolidation of Germany into a powerful kingdom, in defiance of all the hereditary traditions of French policy. Whether the irritation felt throughout France at these various occurrences was reasonable or otherwise is immaterial to the present issue. It is enough to say that the course of events during the last few years has brought home a conviction to the ordinary French intellect that, under the Third Napoleon, France is no longer able to dictate her will to the Continent ; and that the luck ascribed to the Emperor can no longer be trusted.

Simultaneously with the growth of this conviction the public mind was agitated by the excessive expenditure of the Government, by the scandals which became current concerning the highest dignitaries of the Empire, and by the stories of failing health and impaired faculties which, whether with or without reason, gained credence concerning the Emperor himself. The tide, in fact, of public opinion turned against the system of Imperialism, and such tides ebb very rapidly in France. It is needless to retrace the steps by which the interest in public life revived, or the concessions by which that revival was sought to be satisfied. The conflict between the principles of Personal and Representative Government, which commenced from the day when the five Opposition candidates were returned to the Chambers, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Administration, came to a crisis at the late elections. No official ingenuity or courtly flattery could explain away the significance of the recent appeal to universal suffrage. The question virtually submitted to France in June last was whether the country was or was not contented with the Empire as it existed ; and the answer to that appeal was an unmistakeable negative, whose importance the Government was in a position to estimate at its full value.

When the appeal had been answered in this fashion, the Emperor had but two courses to follow. He must either suppress by force the modified liberties which had given the opportunity for the utterance of this popular protest, or he must yield to the demands of the nation. He chose the latter course, and it is only fair to admit that the choice was made frankly and gracefully. The events of the last few months are so fresh in men's minds that we need only recall how the elections were followed by a demand on behalf of the Opposition for the re-establishment of ministerial responsibility ; how the ranks of the Opposition were suddenly swollen by a wholesale defection from the Ministerial majority ; how the Emperor forestalled the threatened discussion by the famous letter of the 12th of July, promising that the reforms demanded should be introduced into the Constitution by means of a *Senatus Consultum* ; how the Chambers were then suddenly prorogued ; how the Senate, though with ill-concealed reluctance, accepted the draft scheme of reform submitted to it by the

Emperor; and how the seal was placed upon the sincerity of the Imperial acceptance of a liberal régime by the resignation of M. Rouher, the ablest and most determined of the champions of French conservatism.

At the time in which we now write there is a lull in the political contest,—a lull due partly to the Emperor's illness, partly to the season of the year, but, above all, to the uncertainty in which French public men still are, both as to the exact nature of the concessions obtained, and still more as to the manner in which those concessions will be accepted by the nation. This lull will probably continue till the meeting of the Chambers,—that is, till after these lines appear in print; and therefore much of what we have further to say must necessarily be of a speculative character.

Taken by themselves, the liberties accorded to the Chambers by the new *Senatus Consultum* are not of a very advanced character. Thenceforward the House of Representatives has power to introduce bills of its own free action, to express its opinion on any subject by what are called "*Ordres des jours motivés*," to elect its own officers, to settle its own rules of debate, to demand explanations from the ministers, to propose and,—subject to certain conditions,—to pass amendments to Government Bills, and to vote the Budget, not as a whole, but item by item. In other words, the Chambers are to have restored to them the great attributes of a representative assembly,—the power of criticism and the power of the purse. To what extent legislative faculties are also placed within their grasp is not equally evident. A certain class of Imperialist panegyrists are fond of drawing comparisons between the constitutions of France and England, and thereby showing that in the latter the power of the popular branch of the Legislature is surrounded with as many restrictions as is the German. In theory, no doubt, the comparison holds water. By constitutional law the Lower House with us can enact no law without the full and free consent of the Sovereign and the Lords. And in our present stage of civilisation the old-fashioned weapon of stopping the supplies is hardly available. Under these conditions our Parliamentary system could never work unless there was a tacit understanding that in the event of conflict between the estates of the nation, both Lords and King must ultimately give way to the Commons. There is no reason, but the contrary, to imagine that a similar understanding exists in France; and yet without it the Legislature has no such independence of action. It does not therefore follow, as Imperialists are fond of asserting, that because the French Chambers will henceforward enjoy analogous theoretical privileges to those enjoyed by the House of Commons, that they will therefore be equally independent. Whatever constitutional theorems may prove, the real power of our own Parliament resides in the fact that no Ministry can remain in office which does not command the support of the majority in the

Lower House. This is what is meant by ministerial responsibility; and the plain meaning of the interpellation of the 116 deputies was that in future any Administration should either govern in accordance with the wishes of the Chambers, or should resign office. In other words, Ministers were to hold power, subject to the good pleasure of an elective assembly, not of an irresponsible monarch. Acquiescence in this demand is fatal to the principle of Personal Government,—fatal, that is, to the principle on which the Second Empire was founded. It is possible that Napoleon III. may consent to this transformation from the character of an independent sovereign to that of a constitutional monarch; but he has not yet consented. The vague phrases about ministerial responsibility, which were introduced into the letter of July, and from that transferred to the *Senatus Consultum*, may mean anything or nothing. In one sense, every official is, and always was, responsible to the country; but no distinct declaration has yet been made to the effect that if the policy of an Administration should displease the Chambers, though it may please the monarch, the Ministers shall abandon their policy or vacate their seats. Supreme power, in this sublunary sphere, cannot reside in two coequal and independent bodies; and in the end it must either be the Parliament or the Sovereign who is invested with supremacy. If the interpellation be acted upon logically, the Emperor, from this time forth, abdicates his sovereignty in favour of a representative assembly. It is commonly assumed abroad that he has already done so; but if he has accepted the fact of ministerial responsibility, Napoleon III. shrinks strangely from its name, and its acceptance is so hostile to all the instincts of Cæsarism, that Frenchmen may be pardoned, if till proof positive be given, they doubt whether the author of the coup d'état can be prepared to make so great a sacrifice. The French, like other nations, perhaps even more than other nations, are influenced by names; but the demand for ministerial responsibility, which is repeated daily in every French newspaper and by every leader of public opinion in France, is not a mere idle cry. In a country so centralised and so bureaucratised the Ministers possess a personal power of which we in England can form no conception; and as long as the Emperor appoints and dismisses his Ministers, he rules France by civil even more than by military organisation. However lenient a view you may take of the 2nd of December, the fact remains that Louis Napoleon betrayed the Government he had sworn to maintain; and this being so, it is only the just Nemesis of fate that the nation, having recovered its liberties, should shrink from again committing them to hands which have once betrayed their trust.

Still, it may be argued, and, as we deem, rightly, that with the institutions established under the *Senatus Consultum*, the acquisition of ministerial responsibility, and indeed of all other political freedom, is a mere question of time. The same pressure which has forced the Emperor

to concede so much, must inevitably compel him to concede more ; and thus, if Frenchmen will only be content to act with moderation, they may secure complete Self-government. This is true enough ; but then if the French had been gifted with the virtue of moderation, there never would have been a Second Empire at all,—or a First, for that matter ; and there has assuredly been nothing in the training of Imperialism to inspire the nation with that aversion to extremes, which is the first requisite for successful Parliamentary institutions. It may be that long and cruel experience has taught France the wholesome truth that in politics half a loaf is better than no bread ; we see, indeed, some faint indications which lead us to hope that this is so ; but if it be, the credit of the privilege thus acquired is not due to the teachings of Cæsarism. In fact, the whole question as to the fortunes of the Empire turns upon the issue whether the Opposition, under which the principle of Personal Government has given way, is of the kind with which France is only too familiar, or of a new and more moderate description.

At the late elections France had to decide whether she would have the Empire without liberty. During the coming Parliamentary struggle she will have to decide whether she will have the Empire with liberty ; and if the answer to that sound question had to be given only by the representatives of the recognised parties, which still make up the great ranks of the Opposition, there could be little doubt as to the negative character of the reply. "*Les anciens partis*," as Napoleon III. not long ago called his opponents, consist of three great sections, though with many subdivisions,—Legitimists, Orleanists, and Republicans,—and between each one of these sections and the Empire there is a gulf not easily to be bridged over. With respect to the first, there is not much that need be said. The days of La Vendée are past, never to return ; and there is about as much chance of a popular rising in Brittany in favour of the White Cockade, as there is of a gathering of the clans in the Highlands against the House of Hanover. The idea of Divine Right is opposed to every instinct of modern French nature ; the noblesse of France, amidst whom alone Legitimacy still flourishes as a creed, have little or none of the social influence possessed by the aristocracy of England ; and even in the Foubourg St. Germain fidelity to the cause of Henry V. is rather a fashion than a living faith. The one sole hold upon the country possessed by the elder branch of the Bourbons, lies in the fact that they undoubtedly represent a principle of stability. To men weary of change and turmoil and revolution, there is a great attraction about a settled dynasty, under which there is no solution of continuity when the crown passes from one head to another, under which the cry of "*Le Roi est mort*" is succeeded as a matter of course by the cry of "*Vive le Roi*." And this regularity of succession can be guaranteed without possibility of dispute by the

restoration of the princes who alone can claim to be kings of France on any other plea than that of the popular will. It is possible, and even probable, that if the Empire should be overthrown, and if its overthrow should be followed by a period of convulsive struggle, there would ensue a reaction in favour of settled order, which might cause France to look favourably on the pretensions of Henry V.; and, therefore, for the Legitimist party, the contingency most propitious to their interests is the downfall of the Napoleon dynasty.

If this is true of the partizans of the elder branch, it is still more true of the adherents of the "*branche cadette*." The Orleanists, pure and simple, hardly seem to be more formidable than the Legitimists. The "*illustrations*" of the party, to use a French word, are a set of eminently worthy and respectable elderly gentlemen, who were great personages under the monarchy of July, and are by no means equally great personages under the Empire. There never yet was a revolution made by professors, and the fact that the Academy is the head-quarters of Orleanism, shows unmistakably the true character of the party. There is, of course, a party influential in character rather than in numbers, which is attached to the House of Orleans by conviction as well as by personal considerations. Among the thinkers of France there are many who are convinced that the best chance for liberty lies in the rule of a constitutional monarchy, and who believe, rightly or wrongly, that a constitutional monarch can only be found amidst the descendants of Louis-Philippe. But thinkers are seldom men of action, and the very moderation of mind which leads the class of men to whom we allude to espouse the cause of Orleanism, renders them averse to violent change of any kind. The true strength of the party lies neither in the active sympathies of the Academicians, nor in the impartial support of moderate politicians, but in the passive good-will of the trading classes. A score of years ago, on the eve of 1848, it was the custom to say that the monarchy of July was firmly established because it was identified with the interests of all persons who had money to lose. How worthless this support of the moneyed class is, as an active agency, was shown in the February of 1848. Men who are afraid above all things of depreciating the value of their investments, will assuredly not raise barricades; but when barricades are raised, they will not attempt to storm them; and, to our mind, one of the most ominous indications for the future of the Empire is, that the Imperialists are now beginning to assert that the Government is secure because it has the moneyed interest upon its side. But though we utterly disbelieve that the shopkeepers and traders and small shareholders of France will ever take an active part in overthrowing the Empire in favour of the House of Orleans, we believe that if the Empire should be overthrown, the might of property might very likely be thrown into the side of the Orleanist cause. After a revolution has spent its first

force, the influence of the moneyed interest is always very powerful ; and apart from all considerations of self-interest, the descendants of the Citizen King have strong claims upon the favour of the bourgeoisie of France. It is true that they do not represent the principle of stability to the same extent as the elder branch, but then they are less connected with the clerical influences so distasteful to the ordinary Frenchman ; and their restoration to power,—unlike that of the elder Bourbons,—would not require a complete repudiation of those “ principles of 1789 ” which all Frenchmen, even of the bourgeois class, regard with more or less of respect. Given a revolution, and the Comte de Paris, or the Duc d’Aumale, or whoever might be the chosen representative of the Orleanist party, would have a very fair prospect of succeeding to the throne ; and therefore the first interests of Orleanists, as of Legitimists, is to bring about the downfall of the Empire.

But the most formidable opponent to the Empire,—as the late elections proved beyond question,—the only formidable one for the present, is the republican party. We once heard a Frenchman in a café discoursing on politics, who finished his discourse by stirring up a cup of chocolate and saying, “ You see that whenever I stir this chocolate, the grits come to the top ; so, whenever you stir up France, the Republic will come to the surface.” This we think to be the truth. The Republic has a hold upon the French mind, of a far stronger kind than that perceived by either the Bourbons or the Orleanists, or even by the Napoleons. In so saying we may seem to contradict our previous conviction about the popular dread of, and aversion to, the Republic, having been the main cause of the triumph of the coup d’état. The contradiction, however, is rather nominal than real. The French nation seems to us to be distracted by two conflicting tendencies,—a morbid terror of the Republic, in the concrete, and an intense admiration for the Republic in the abstract,—and each force predominates in turn according to the course of events. There has been now a long interval of tranquillity. The “ Spectre Rouge ” has not appeared for so many years, that its name has lost much of the terror it inspired after 1848 ; and the republican proclivities of France are again in the ascendant. Personal loyalty, in the monarchical sense of the word, cannot exist in France ; what little there is, is associated with the dynasty of the great Napoleon ; and the great majority of Frenchmen, who take any interest in politics at all, are Republicans by conviction. They may not all act upon their convictions ; many of them are Orleanists by profession, because they assume that France, not being ripe for a Republic, a Constitutional Monarchy affords the best substitute for the rule of the many ; but in their hearts the French Liberals are Republicans with scarcely an exception. Amidst the working classes, the classes which have always made revolutions in France, the preference for a republican

form of Government is very general; and in the city constituencies, wherever artizans are in the majority, no candidate has any prospect of success under the reign of universal suffrage who is not believed to be a Republican in politics. The "Irreconcilables" is the common appellation of the republican deputies; and the time does not seem far distant when the Irreconcilables may be in a majority in the Chambers.

Thus, as a matter of fact, each one of the three sections into which the Opposition is divided contemplates a revolution as the first step to the accomplishment of its policy. That this should be so is intelligible enough. There is engrained in the French nature an impatience of compromise, a passion for following out a principle to its extreme logical development, which is almost incompatible with the acceptance of the Empire by the partizans of any other form of Government. And also it is only fair to admit that, for French Liberals of any shade, it is no light or easy matter to accept the Empire even after its recent conversion to Liberalism. There are few, if any, among the older members of the Opposition, who, in their own persons, or in that of those nearest to them, have not suffered much personal wrong at the hands of the present Government of France. The way in which the law of public safety was worked in the early days of the Empire is a thing not to be forgotten in a day by those who were the victims of the Emperor's triumph. Even the generation which has grown up to political life since the 2nd of December has injuries of its own, scarcely less grievous than of their predecessors. To have suffered from youth to manhood beneath a system in which free speech, free writing, free action, were forbidden under pain of imprisonment or exile, or, to say the least, of ostracism from all the prizes of public life, is not a course of training calculated to make men moderate when the wheel of fortune has placed power in their grasp; and if the French Liberals were prepared at once to say, "let bygones be bygones," and to rally to the support of a liberal Empire, they would, as we deem, be giving proof perhaps of patriotism, and they would also be showing an example of self-restraint,—rare in the political annals of any country,—unknown in those of France. Moreover, even supposing that the Irreconcilables should become sincerely and honestly desirous of reconciliation, can they feel any confidence in the duration of the sudden alliance between Cæsarism and Liberalism? It is a common opinion in England that Napoleon III. really intends to reign henceforward as a constitutional monarch; but if we are asked to give proofs for the faith that is in us, we should find it extremely hard to produce them. The whole traditions of the Napoléons are hostile to popular liberty; all the antecedents of the present Emperor point to an ineradicable preference for Personal over Representative Government; and the professions of the ruler, who used his power as President of the

Republic to place himself upon the throne, cannot inspire any great degree of confidence. It may be better for France to try the experiment of a representative Government under the Bonaparte dynasty; but we can find little to answer to any French Liberal who tells us that the experiment is too hopeless to be worth the trying.

The best chance for the Emperor is to be found in the circumstance that each section of the Opposition dislikes the others, as much as, if not more than, it dislikes the Empire; and that no section commands the support of anything more than a comparatively small minority of the French nation. The formation, for the first time in the history of the Empire, of a liberal party, whose opposition is political and not dynastic, affords more ground to hope that this is so; and though the "Tiers parti" has not yet achieved any good popular success, it is still in its infancy. It is encouraging, too, to observe that since the Press has recovered the power of free utterance, some of the leading French liberal journals advocate a loyal acceptance of the Empire under its reconstituted form. But, as yet, the serious conflict has not commenced; and, judging by the experience of the past, one could say that when the struggle has begun in earnest,—when the Chambers attempt, as they will assuredly, to make use of the powers entrusted to them, the battle will probably be reduced to one between the supporters and the opponents of the existing dynasty.

What the outcome of such a battle may be, it is impossible to foretell. The Emperor has immense resources on his side; and it remains to be seen whether the nation is sufficiently earnest in its desire for Self-government to support the Opposition at the risk of bringing about a revolution. The name of Napoleon is still dear to France,—dear, above all, to the classes from which the army is levied; and, moreover, there is a democratic aspect to Imperialism, which has made the rank and file of the Republicans less hostile to the Empire than to any other form of monarchical government. If the Emperor can hold his own against any direct assault upon his dynasty; if having once more proved his power, he should make no use of such power to withdraw the liberties he has granted; and if he should live in health and vigour for another ten years, he may succeed in transmitting the Imperial crown in safety to his son. But these suppositions are all highly problematical. The common opinion throughout France is that a change is at hand, and such opinions are very apt to justify themselves by the result. Meanwhile, whatever may be the effect of the impending crisis on the fortunes of the Empire, all sincere Liberals must rejoice at the revival of political agitation in France. It is good that Personal Government, however able, should be shown to be a failure,—good, that material prosperity and foreign prestige should be shown to be insufficient to satisfy a nation which has once enjoyed political freedom,—good, we may add, not only for France, but for the world.

THE TREE OF HUMAN INVENTION.

PARAPHRASED FROM A CHAPTER IN VICTOR HUGO'S "L'HOMME QUI RIT."

WINTER, and night, and snow, and muttering storm !
Cliffs sloping upward to bleak, pathless downs !
A boy, lone, barefoot, hungry, numb with cold !

Why he was there, and why abandoned thus,
Need not be told. Enough, that he was left
By brutal guardians when they fled to sea,
Left on the shore, to storm and snow and night.
He had no home. He knew not whence he came,
Nor whither he should go. He only knew
That down the cliff by them he had been brought ;
And, therefore, climbed he its rough slope again.

Sad, but stout-hearted, the boy gained the top,
Where, wan and white, lay undulating plains,
Without or track or house or sign of life.
Aimless, he set himself to plodding on ;
But, sudden, stopped and listened. A strange noise
Reached him, unlike the roar of sea or wind,
Or cry of any animal. He thought
Some one was there ; then, to a little mound
Whence the noise came, moved on with quickened step.
Some one, in truth, was there ! Athwart the mist
Rose up an object dubious yet distinct,
Straight from the earth, like a huge arm, with thumb
Propping a stretched forefinger. From the point
Where thumb and finger joined, formless and black,
Something was pendent by a chain. The wind,
Low breathing, stirred the chain. What hung thereby,
In the dim quiverings of surrounding space,
Swayed gently. Thence the sound the boy had heard.

Statured as man and swaddled as a babe,
Shrivelled and jagged, and in holes, through which
Bones hideous peered, this shred of human kind
Was but a remnant ; terrible remains,—
Of what ? Of Nature, and of social law !
And the dead creature had been stripped ; no voice
Now in his throat ; no marrow in his frame.
Silently wasting was he. Night's dark hands

Had his poor body rummaged, drunk his blood,
Eaten his skin, stolen his flesh. December
Had borrowed of him cold; iron, its rust;
Plague, its miasma;—and the flower, its perfume.
His slow disintegration was a toll
Paid by the corpse to wind, and rain, and dew,
And bird, and reptile. In the vast still gloom,
Gloomily was he of a piece with all.
In him the desert's inexpressible sense
Became concrete; and he intensified
The wailing of the elements.

Aghast

Stood the child, mute and staring. For a man,
It would have been a gibbet. For the boy,
It was a ghost. Spell-bound, he mounted up
Despite himself, and bold, though trembling, took
A closer survey. It was horrible.
Tarred was the phantom; in coarse canvas wrapt,
Impregnated with naphtha, frayed, and rent.
One knee passed through. A slit exposed the ribs.
Part body was; part bones. The livid face
Was of clay-colour; slugs had traversed it,
Leaving vague silvery ribbons. Cracked and split,
The skull was parted like a rotten fruit.
Drops of bitumen stood, as tears congealed,
In what had once been eyes. The teeth remained
Still what they were in life, and still preserved
Their ghastly smile. The head, bent sidling down,
Seemed to give heed. No covering on the feet.
But on the ground beneath them had been dropped,
Sodden and shapeless now, two empty shoes.
The boy bare-footed, eyed the empty shoes.
Gusts, sweeping past, had swept away the snow,
Showing that one spot on those barren downs
Tufted with rank grass. There, beneath the gallows,
Rich was the soil. Earth fattens upon man.

Smugglers had long been opportunely tarred
And on the shore left hanging, as a beacon
To comrades out at sea. From time to time
Their coating also was renewed, to fit them
For lengthened service. Thus,—as Egypt's kings
Were highly prized, when mummies,—England's people,
Tarred into mummies, were made useful, too.

Wierd fascination held the child. He gazed,
And still gazed on unconsciously. A lull
Delayed the tempest. The corpse did not stir.

Straight as plumb-line the chain hung motionless.
 Torpor was fast betraying the numbed boy
 Into death's hands. The spectre might have seen,
 And, in sheer pity, stirred itself again,
 As though to warn him.—'Twas the rising wind.

Strange, in the gloom, this movement of the corpse
 At the chains end, by breath invisible
 Impelled, it rose obliquely to the left;
 Fell back; and to the right obliquely rose.
 Mechanical precision! Rise and fall
 Deadly and slow! See-saw with omen fraught!
 One might have thought Eternity's own clock
 Was swinging to and fro its pendulum!

Fright overcame the poor boy's drowsiness.
 The chain, at every oscillation, creaked
 With hideous regularity. Anon
 The breeze became a gale. The carcass' swaying
 Received funereal emphasis, no longer
 Balanced, but shaken; and the chain, in place
 Of creaking, screamed.

The scream perchance was heard;
 Or, if a call, was answered. A great noise
 Up from the far horizon came,—a noise
 Of countless ravens' wings. Black flying spots
 Dotted the clouds; pierced through the mists; grew larger;
 Drew nearer; thickened; massed themselves. 'Twas like
 The coming of a legion, as they swooped,
 Uttering their cry. Winged vermin of the gloom,
 They lighted on the gibbet, one and all.
 Swarms obey leaders. Grouped, they held discourse,
 Croaking their unclean counsel. Petrified,
 The boy looked on. The ravens ceased their croak.
 One gave the signal, on the skeleton
 Down dropping; for an instant flapped all wings;
 Then closed again. The spectre disappeared
 Under a cluster of black blisters, pulsing
 In the dark shade. The dead man shook himself;
 Or, at his need, the risen hurricane
 Came to his aid. He gave a frightful bound,
 This way, then that way, like a madman struggling,
 Or phantom in convulsions, or a puppet
 With gallows-chain for string and ghostly jester
 Plying the cord. Away, in terror, flew
 The obscene ravens, for a moment scared.
 Then they flew back; and battle fierce began.

The dead man seemed endowed with monstrous life;

Frantic in efforts to escape, but held
Back by his fetters. Each spasmodic blast
Lifted, and swung, and jerked him, while the birds
Followed his motions,—strange attempt at flight,
And strange pursuit of object manacled !
Sometimes the corpse threw somersets, had fits
Of rage, and pivotted upon itself,
Facing the swarm on every side at once,
As though to run its persecutors down.
Sometimes the claws and wings were all upon it ;
Then nothing,—obstinately resolute
The assailing horde, the assaulted multiplying
His blind blows in the void, like strokes of stone
Fast in its sling. Did the dark deities
Mix in the fight ? The wind was in his favour,
The chain against him. 'Twas a skeleton
Matched against demons. Clash of beak and claw,
Tearing of fragments now no longer flesh,
Clanking of rusty iron, shriek of squalls,
Hurtle of carcass ! Could confusion be
More ghastly dismal ? And the sea, below,
Sent up its bellowings !

 All this, in the boy,
Extremest terror wrought. Awe-struck, he turned
Staggering ; and downward—with dishevelled hair,
Closed eyes, and hands upon his forehead pressed,—
Rushed from the hillock, while behind him still
Ravens and corpse kept up their loathsome fight.

LORD BROUGHAM.

CLOSE upon a hundred years ago, a young man, scion of a family known for centuries in the district, succeeded to a small patrimony in Westmoreland. He had been thought clever at Eton; the Duke of Buccleugh had been his fag; and he not unnaturally found some difficulty in limiting his "wish and care" to the "few paternal acres" annexed by way of estate to the "small quaint dwelling-house in a castellated style, with little turrets at the corners," which was called the Bird's Nest. He roamed about the fine wild county, read books, fell passionately in love, and was about to be married. Then the lady died. The event threw him adrift. Settlement in the small quaint house was not to be thought of. He set out on his travels, caring probably little whither he went, if only he left his native Westmoreland, with its agonising memories, behind him. He came to Edinburgh, and, on casual recommendation, took up his abode in a lodging-house in the Cowgate, kept by Mrs. Syme, widow of the Rev. Mr. Syme of Alloa, and sister to Dr. Robertson. He was thus accidentally introduced to the best intellectual society of Scotland; and the best intellectual society of Scotland, in the days of Hume and Robertson, has been regarded as equal to the best intellectual society in Europe. Mrs. Syme had an only daughter, Eleanor, beautiful, good-tempered, of graceful manners, and excellent parts and education. The young Englishman fell in love with her, and, on finding that she could not bear the idea of being parted from her widowed mother, offered to remain in Edinburgh for the rest of his life. All difficulties thus removed, the nuptials were celebrated by Principal Robertson, and the bridegroom never again looked upon Westmoreland. In due time the Edinburgh Register of Births was enriched by the following entry:—"30th September, 1778. Henry Brougham, Esq., parish of St. Giles, and Eleanor Syme, his spouse, a son, born the 19th current, named Henry Peter." This Henry Peter grew into Lord Chancellor Brougham.

"It is quite certain," says Lord Campbell, who knew Brougham familiarly for forty years, and who may be believed when he says anything that does not tell to his friend's disadvantage or his own glorification, "that from earliest infancy he gave indications of being something quite extraordinary." He galloped on all fours with more energy than other infants; he spoke sooner and clearer, and with more amazing volubility than usually characterises that pleasing age.

Long before he was two, he ran about with little Frank Horner on the pavement. He would clamber on chairs and tables and fall flat, to the delectation of his play-fellows, never breaking any bones, and elastically springing on his feet in a moment to prepare for a new exploit. Something was wrong, one would say, from the first, with his centre of gravity,—the active force out of proportion to the balancing power. To rest by day and to sleep by night were his great difficulties. "His nurse, Barbara or Bawby Dempster," had no end of trouble with him. "On one occasion she had prevailed upon him to lie down, and although still awake, to shut his eyes while she hummed him a lullaby; but he suddenly started up, saying, 'Naw, naw, Bawby, it wanna dee.'" The image of the baby Brougham, starting up like a perturbed spirit from his attempt to sleep, and urging the hopelessness of the case upon Bawby in that Doric exclamation which seems expressly formed to open wide the jaws, and thus compensate them for the enforced silence of three minutes, rises not unfrequently to the recollection of one who studies the career of the man.

As the child grew into the boy, it became every day more manifest that the superabundant vitality of Henry Peter had its source and seat in the brain. At the High School his master once takes exception to some phrase or phrases used by him in translating into Latin a paper in the *Spectator*. He maintains that the Latin is good; the pedagogue not only insists that it is bad, but administers personal castigation to the presumptuous disputant. Next day the boy appears "with a load of books upon his back," and, renewing the combat, demonstrates that the condemned expressions had been used by writers of the Augustan period. Though his attendance at school is interrupted by a year of illness, he speedily regains his place as *dux*, and is recognised by Adam, Rector of the High School, and a great luminary in the pedagogic world of those days, as by far the cleverest boy in his class. Nor does the performance of his school tasks exhaust his energy. He has been seen by "Mr. Richardson, a valued friend" of Lord Campbell's, "and a far-away cousin of Brougham," on one of the bridges of Edinburgh, with a huge quarto under his arm, which proves to be *La Place* in the original. Mr. Richardson wonders what kind of boy this is who studies mathematics not only for pleasure, but in a foreign tongue. When, before completing his thirteenth year, he leaves the High School, a good many persons coincide with Mr. Richardson in thinking him a bit of a prodigy.

Between his leaving school and his entering college, a year, if Campbell's dates are correct, intervened. At all events, he became an alumnus of Edinburgh University at the commencement of his fifteenth year; and here, as previously, he continued to surprise mankind. With eager, all-grasping delight, he seized the golden apples in the new gardens of the Hesperides, whose expanses opened

before him. Classics, mathematics, physical science, metaphysical speculation, nothing came amiss to him,—and in pursuit of one and all of them he stood among the pre-eminent few in what was then one of the most famous seminaries in Europe. More than this, however, was required to feed the activity of Brougham. This might content the Jeffreys, Cockburns, Murrays, with whom he loved to discuss literary and philosophical problems, and whose most careful reasonings and polished sentences he overpowered by the impetuous and headlong dash of his youthful eloquence. But a fund of surplus energy was still left on his hands, and, in particular, he experienced his old difficulty of disposing of himself when other mortals slept. To get through the night with as little of the distressing labour of sleep as possible was always a problem for Brougham. So he took up with “fellows of dissipation fun and frolic, such as Sandie Finlay, Jack Gordon, and Frank Drummond;” and when Cockburn and Jeffrey had retired to soothing slumbers or to midnight oil, he might be found, fresh as in the morning, “rollicking in taverns, ringing bells in the street, twisting off bell-pulls and knockers, or smashing lamps,” in company of the aforesaid worthies. Sometimes the intellectual set ventured to mingle with the wild boys; but this was not safe. Jeffrey, Cockburn, Moncrieff, and Cunningham,—all of them law lords in their day,—once proceeded to make night hideous in the streets of Edinburgh, under the auspices of Brougham. Having regaled himself with wrenching off a fair proportion of knockers, and smashing sundry lamps, the ingenuous youth left his friends in the lurch, and gave information to the police, who straightway sallied forth against them. No harm was done. What with swift scampering and what with judicious bribing, they all escaped; and Brougham had to content himself with a laugh at their fright, in default of the glory of having secured them a night’s lodging in the Tolbooth. The present generation has lost the capacity, not only of enjoying this kind of sport, but even of seeing wherein the fun of it lay. Not merely college striplings, but grown men, for several generations found it a charming thing to make, as we should say, fools of themselves. Goethe and the Duke of Weimar stood for hours cracking huge sledge whips in the market-place, and Wilson’s Noctes Ambrosianæ owed probably much of their dazzling popularity to their literary representation of that facetious horse-play of the period, which now strikes us as intolerably stupid. There are medical theorists who say that, though we take better care of ourselves than our fathers did, and though fewer of us die in childhood, we are a feebler race, and our virtues and our diseases are alike asthenic. We seem to lack, and very recent generations seem to have possessed, an exuberance of animal spirits, which could go off in shouts of Houyhnm laughter, at the prompting of any joke that

was loud and boisterous, however dull. A finer wit is required to titillate our more tender nerves, and stir the pulses of our cooler blood; but though the old horse-play has gone, it is not by any means so clear that the new wit has come. Be it not imagined, however, that animal spirits alone accounted, now or subsequently, for the convivialism of Brougham. Every pre-eminent faculty imputed to him has, we think, been called in question except this. It has never been denied that, when mirth was the business of the hour, he was the life of the company. Whether among those Edinburgh lawyers, whom Scott allowed to be more pleasant than his own Tory set, and whom Lord Campbell, after half a century of experience in England, declared the most delightful companions he had ever known,—or in English circuits, where a Scotch accent and Caledonian manner might be supposed to stand in his way,—Brougham was always accepted as the gayest and heartiest of convivialists.

Behind this scene of exciting activity and tumultuous sport, with its mixed elements of good and of evil, it is pleasant to glance into that domestic circle, in which Brougham could always take refuge, and of which every influence was benign. The father has subsided into an amiable, unambitious, rather formal gentleman, who cultivates literature as an amusement, and takes his walk in George Street, in pea-green coat and nankeen short breeches, “confining his turns entirely to the short space between his own door and the bend of Hanover Street.” He leaves the management of the house and the children to his wife; and he does well. Her beauty of face and of character has mellowed under the sun and shower of maternal joy and care, and her gracious presence, calm intelligence, and considerate kindness, pervade the place with the sweet constraint of tender and unconscious sovereignty. It is she who was the emblem to her children of all that is most sacred and blissful in the idea of home. Her son Henry she entirely understood, in his strength and in his weakness. She was his best counsellor, his dearest friend. Perfect love reigned between them. Lord Murray says that once, when he was in Paris, Brougham, thinking a sight of the city would amuse her, took her there. “She became unwell, and nothing could exceed his attention to her.” He dragged Murray all round Paris, trying to find calf’s-foot jelly for her. In the hardest press of his official duties, Brougham wrote to his mother every day. A word from her could at any moment have calmed and quelled him, and deep as the fountain of tenderness in his nature lay hidden beneath rugged logic and rasping law, it would always have overflowed in tears at the touch of her finger, or the gentle majesty of her appealing eye. The thought of Brougham’s mother inspires even Lord Campbell with something like enthusiasm. “She was,”

he says, "a most remarkable woman for intellect, for acquirements, for engaging manners, and for devoted attention to her maternal duties."

It had perhaps been well for Brougham if, in his hot and headlong youth, he had retired oftener to the genial domain presided over by his mother. The loveliest light is that which is tempered by shade. The delicate veining of the tinted rock shows with most tender and witching brilliancy through the liquid crystal that trickles over it from the spring. The talent of repose, also,—to imitate a phrase of Goethe's,—is one which we have all to learn, and which was specially required by this impetuous and fiery being. Bootless, however, it always is to lament over the freaks or oversights of destiny. The faculty of sitting still Brougham was not to learn, and it is as well to admit the truth at once. Activity was for him the condition of enjoyment, the necessity of life. If, by any conjuncture of circumstances, he had nothing to do, he languished, became ill, and seemed to be sinking into madness or the grave. He would have told Mephisto, with Faust, that, if he could but enchant him into complacent indolence, if he could but prevail upon him to bid the moment stay, instead of hurrying on and up to new fields of endeavour, he might do with him what he pleased. His eager intellect, having absorbed all that the regular curriculum of Edinburgh University could afford, as flame licks up water, was now beginning to pierce into realms beyond. He had been instituting a series of experiments on the inflection, reflection, and colour of light, and, in January, 1796, a paper on the subject from his pen was read before the Royal Society of London, and ordered to be published in their Transactions. This is conclusive proof that it was neither absurd nor feeble, and, at the date of the reading, Brougham had just passed the threshold of his eighteenth year. At nineteen he entered the Speculative Society, then in the zenith of its reputation, and need we say that he soon made himself a name in this congenial arena? A passion for expression was born with him, and the excitement of debate charmed him as the excitement of dance and song charms ordinary juveniles. The eye of imagination has no difficulty in seeing him as he was about this period. A rough, raw-boned, restless creature, with keen, glittering eyes, black locks, and one of those faces which nature, if she cannot force you to admire, does not permit you to forget; voracious of knowledge, confident in himself, ready in debate, pugnacious, pertinacious, tough as vulcanised india-rubber; giving play to his strong lungs, swinging his bony arms, and already striking dismay by the penetrating shafts of his sarcasm. A marked and almost alarming phenomenon among the demure Horners and smooth Pettys of the Speculative Society!

Having chosen law as his profession, Brougham addressed himself with his accustomed energy to master the principles and technicalities

of the science. Campbell admits his skill in Roman and Feudal jurisprudence, and it was impossible for him to bring his mind to bear upon any subject for a considerable time without making extraordinary progress. Equally impossible, however, was it for him to contract himself into an expert in a single department of knowledge; and, while prosecuting his legal studies and taking the first steps in his career as an advocate, he continued the pursuit of mathematical and chemical science, and extended his reading into history and political economy. He found time also for a tour through the capitals and some of the provinces of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark.

In 1808 he presented the world with his first book. It consists of two octavo volumes, and has for subject the Colonial Policy of the European Powers. To this day it retains its value, we had almost said its freshness. Except animation and vivacity, it has no quality of a young man's book. The style is clear and nervous, never overloaded with words; metaphors do not abound, and those which occur do good service in elucidating or enforcing the sense. You perceive that the author has had long practice in composition, and has got rid alike of the grandiloquence and the obscurity of scribbling boyhood. An intelligent reader of this book might already have discerned that the sphere for which Henry Brougham was pre-eminently adapted was that of public man in a free country. He had studied, and in a good school,—that of Adam Smith and the great French Economists,—the principles of government, administration and commerce. He had considered the question of the slave-trade and the character of slavery as an institution, and, with no trace of maudlin sentimentality, with no touch of rhetorical exaggeration, he pronounced clear condemnation upon both. After all that has been said and written on slavery, from the publication of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* to the conclusion of the American war, we are unable to point to any exposure of the evils of that system which, to use his own expressive words, "allots the sweat and dust to the African, and reserves to the European the fruit and the shade," so brief, so philosophical, so convincing, as that which we find in Brougham's first book. To prove that the bane lies in the system, not in the circumstances which attend it, he follows it into its brilliant lair in the classic times, and points out that, though citizen and slave were then of the same race, though elegance and philosophy combined to refine manners, yet profligacy and cruelty, both inhuman, were the universal taint of society. It is pointedly incorrect to say, as Lord Campbell does, that "in no part of this work do we discover the burning indignation against negro slavery as a status which he afterwards evinced." He did not, it is true, propose immediate and unconditional emancipation; to have done so at that time would have

been to close the ears of public men to his suggestions; but nothing short of emancipation could give practical effect to the principles laid down in the book.

A few months before the publication of Brougham's work on the Colonial Policy of the European Powers, literary star-gazers had signalled the appearance on the horizon of what then seemed a wild and startling meteor, and has since taken its place as the most regular and steady-paced of planets, the *Edinburgh Review*. He was an active contributor from the first, and for upwards of forty years there was hardly a number in which some piece of trenchant logic, or pungent sarcasm, or lashing invective, did not betray his hand. Whiggism was in the ebb of its fortunes when these bold *Edinburgh* barristers raised its banner, and told its champions in Parliament and out of it, to be of good cheer. From the day when the *Edinburgh Review* first saw the light every one who called himself a Whig had something to be proud of. Decorous as its early numbers appear, in comparison with what we have since seen of wild writing in Blackwood and Fraser,—Chaldee manuscripts, *Noctes Ambrosianæ*, *Clothes Philosophies* by Herr Professor Teufelsdröch,—they seemed almost revolutionary to that generation. The stage of public life was dreadfully cumbered with conventions, stupid fallacies, cowardly prepossessions, and these young fellows came "scattering the past about," to prepare a new age. "Lord Eldon and the Court of Chancery pressed heavily on mankind. Libel was punished with the most cruel and vindictive punishments. The principles of political economy were little understood. The laws of debt and conspiracy were on the worst footing. The enormous wickedness of the slave-trade was tolerated." And men lived in the persuasion that, if anything in this were altered, the heavens would fall, and all the blessedness of free-born Britons would come to an end. The Whigs saw that this was nonsense. They snapped the spell by the firm touch of common sense. So far from being revolutionists, they were men whose peculiar office in nature it is to avert revolutions by converting them into regulated and gradual transitions,—men alive at once to the danger of protracted resistance, and the danger of sudden and extreme innovation,—men of cool and clear brain, and business-like tact and resolution; men likely to fail only in terrible emergencies, when maxims and precedents are cast away, and ultimate principles meet in conflict.

Brougham was one of the earliest *Edinburgh Reviewers*, and great was his joy in the work and in the fun; but, from the first, and to the last, he and the Whigs never exactly suited each other. Mr. Bagehot, in his racy sketch of the *Edinburgh Whigs*, takes note of the fact. Henry Brougham he pronounces a man of "too fitful, defective, and strange greatness," to be spoken of at the same time with the other founders of the *Review*. "He was con-

nected with the Whigs," adds Mr. Bagehot, "but he never was one. His impulsive ardour is the opposite of their coolness; his irregular discursive intellect contrasts with their quiet and perfecting mind." This is true, and it is all that Mr. Bagehot was called upon to say; but it is not the whole truth. Brougham was a Whig, distinctively a Whig, though he was more. At the commencement of this century a number of clever men in England and in France had ascertained many of the laws of the social system, and had convincingly stated them. The Whigs mastered those laws; and Brougham studied so long and so carefully in the school out of which the reforming phalanx of the modern Whigs proceeded,—the school of Adam Smith, we should call it, if required to designate it by any one name, that his thinking, writing, speaking, projecting and effecting, from the beginning of his public career to the end, bore testimony to its influence. Candidly contemplating his career, as a whole, we are inclined to pronounce him, not only a Whig, but the prince of Whigs. Which of all the Whigs made so comprehensively, or thoroughly, his own the lessons of Whiggism? He was dux in all the classes; or, at least, if he had one equal, or even two, in each department, he distanced every competitor in general proficiency. Horner was as well versed in the doctrines of the currency; MacIntosh and Romilly possessed many of his ideas on law reform; Wilberforce and Clarkson were as thoroughly convinced of the evils of slavery; Huskisson was as sincere a free-trader; one Whig may have felt as deeply the injustice of political disabilities on account of religious belief, another the importance of popular education, a third the evil of indiscriminate charity and legalised sloth, a fourth the absurdity of palliating vice or lauding incapacity when incarnated in nobles or in kings. But before Horner and his committee had converted Peel to common sense on the currency, and prepared the way for his conversion to common sense on the Corn Laws, Brougham needed no conversion on either question. At each new step taken by the party of progress, he was ready to join in the onward movement, if, indeed, it were not he who gave the word for advance. When still a young man he had embraced that entire body of doctrine whose adoption into our constitutional system has been gradually taking place for fifty years.

Brougham was a Whig also in this,—that his intellectual method was essentially logical. His most impassioned writing is a logical chain. The links may be white-hot, from the intensity of the feeling, but the logic is there. What may appear more doubtful, or more strange, but is, nevertheless, true, his oratory also is based on logic. His most vehement sentences are argumentative. Hazlitt, in criticising him as an orator, insists upon this, to his detraction. His eloquence is defined by Hazlitt as characteristically Scotch; as, in spite of its fervour, bare and hard; as dependent on facts; and,

therefore, as naturally inferior to the eloquence of the Irish, glowing with emotion, and supplying the place of logic by intuition.

Once more, Brougham was distinctively and admirably Whig in his frank and rugged contempt for the sentimentalities of expiring feudalism. In the feudal system in its best time he seems to have discerned little poetry; and in the hollow and artificial feudalism which was swept from Europe by the French Revolution, and which still had fascination enough to paralyse the intellect of Burke, he saw nothing but what was fit for the besom of destruction. He had the true Whig contempt for those gewgaws which dazzle the mob,—not least the monied mob,—“glory,” and the like.

When all this has been said, however, it remains true that Brougham was more than a Whig, that the Whigs felt it, and that he never pulled well in harness with them. The circumstance was due partly to his defects. Though, in an emergency, he worked for his party with an intensity and continuance that would have killed any ordinary man,—though no taint of covetousness or selfish baseness was ever imputed to him, and he would at any time have sacrificed himself for the cause,—yet there was something in his nature that could be neither understood nor calculated on, something which may remain a problem for the curious in psychology, something which we do not pretend to define or explain, but which we connect with that incapacity to sleep and that difficulty in keeping his centre of gravity rightly adjusted, which characterised him in long clothes. That he should be daring, incautious, headstrong, may be well enough comprehended as arising from his ardent temperament, his brilliant success at school, at college, and in society, as in fact the usual and not ungraceful accompaniment of magnificent capacity in the flush of youth. But that there should have lurked in close company with his vigilant, keen, and penetrating intellect a simplicity which might at any moment be taken off its guard, a guilelessness almost childish, a blundering awkwardness capable of covering himself and his associates with ridicule, is not so easy to be understood. Men of transcendent talents have often acted as madmen; the peculiarity in the case of Brougham was that, with one of the most splendidly endowed intellects of his time, he on several occasions acted like a fool. His announcement that he would write to his Majesty without loss of a post to tell him that he lived in the hearts of the citizens of Inverness; his off-hand chatty mention to Queen Victoria at a drawing-room that he was in a few days to cross the Channel, if she had any message or parcel for King Louis-Philippe; his proposal to be at one and the same time ex-Chancellor in the English House of Peers and republican orator in the National Assembly of France; these will occur to those who know the history of his life, not as mere mistakes, but as momentary lapses into sheer imbecility which no theory yet established can account for. What is not only intelligible but

obvious is, that this mysterious characteristic of Brougham's must have been a fatal drawback to the cordiality of his relations with the Whigs. All men dread ridicule, and public men, in a country where public affairs may be said with hardly a figure to be transacted in the open air, have the best of reasons for dreading associates who may expose them to derision. That fine sense of the proper and the becoming which has been recognised as one mark of the genuine Whig increased the difficulty of establishing relations of perfect harmony between the Whigs and Brougham. They were sure to do without him as soon as they could; "to hang the gipsy when his work was done;" to offer up the ram which had borne them to Colchis. Few men of the world will blame them. Few political parties would have acted differently. And yet one cannot help feeling that men of stronger geniality, of more hearty friendliness, less femininely sensitive, less intent upon their personal ambitions and their personal reputations, might have got on better with Brougham than the Whigs did. Had they succeeded in the attempt, vast benefit at once to Liberalism and to England might have been the result. He was the natural leader and born king of the party. Had they been braver and stronger men, they would have conquered their puny aristocratism, and raised him on their shields. Their grudge against him was like that of the Scotch nobles against Wallace. Had he been prudent, circumspect, and an aristocrat, they would have delighted to do him honour. Had they carried him by acclamation into the Premiership, had they moderated and calmed him while rendering him loyal obedience, their defeat by Peel might have been averted, and the progress of the country might have been accelerated by a quarter of a century. The Whig party was triumphant so long as it held to Brougham. It owed its decadence essentially to the feebleness of its chiefs. Free trade chirruped on the lap of Peel, household franchise crowded in the arms of Disraeli, because the Melbournes and the Russells were men of the second order. Brougham, it is true, did not co-operate with the Anti-Corn Law League. His study of the French Revolution had taught him to distrust and condemn association for political purposes in countries which have an elected House of Commons and a free press. But he pronounced against the Corn Laws long before Peel. The Whig formula on the subject of representation,—the mystical ten-pound line and the finality of the Reform Bill of 1832,—the senile shudder at Radicalism, and stolid contempt for first principles which you meet with in such a Whig as Lord Campbell,—had no place in the intellect of Brougham.

For the follies and superficialities of vulgar Radicalism no man could have had a more sincere contempt. The noisy blockheads whose political philosophy consists in a belief that everything old is worthless, and everything novel and untested, excellent, and who never hear the cry in the street of new lamps for old without rushing out with

the old, though it may be a lamp of Aladdin, requiring only to be rubbed to yield diamonds, to exchange it for the new, though it is but a bit of glittering tin, were the object of his scornful detestation. But he had drunk into his soul, and flashed forth in eloquent splendours, as from an internal lake of fire, all that is essentially true in modern Radicalism. Brougham saw clearly that,—uttered now in one dialect now in another, now by English Puritans, now by French Republicans,—the principle which lies at the foundation of all political movement in modern times, is the supremacy of peoples and the conversion of political institutions into machinery for their benefit and organs for their will. This or nothing is the principle which underlies modern Liberalism ; this is the principle which Mr. Gladstone has expressly proclaimed as that on which he shapes the policy of the liberal party. But the bold expression of it has always startled the Russellite Whig. We all know how alarming and revolutionary Mr. Gladstone's avowal of "trust in the people" as the regulating principle of his statesmanship was felt to be by orthodox Whigs. If they search in the writings of Brougham they will find that he was capable of anticipating by five-and-twenty years that alliance between Whiggism and Radicalism which has been effected by Gladstone. "An absolute prince," says Brougham, "once exclaimed, 'The State? I am the State!' But the people may most justly exclaim, 'We are the State!' For them laws are made ; for them governments are constituted. To secure their peace, and protect them from injury without and within the realm, rulers are appointed, revenues raised, police established, armies levied. To exclude them from the superintendence of their own affairs is as if the owner of an estate were refused the inspection of his accounts by his steward." Fiery and perilous stuff, which your cool Macaulay or sagacious Russell will any day prove to be inconsistent with maintenance of a safe compromise between liberty and order throughout the world ! "As all government," says Brougham again, "is made for the benefit of the community, the people have a right, not only to be governed, but to be well governed ; and not only to be well governed, but to be governed as well as possible ; that is, with as little expense to their natural freedom and their resources as is consistent with the nature of human affairs." He was in favour of the representation of all householders when not one Whig in fifty would have dared to think of such a thing, and he called Lord John Russell sternly to account for his doctrine of finality when the Reform Bill was but a few years old. Nay, he positively declares that, in 1832, he avowed that the Bill was not a final measure. For the particular expedients by which modern Radicals have proposed to keep parliaments and magistrates in a due state of responsibility to peoples,—ballots, triennial parliaments, and the like,—he had a very limited respect. His comprehensive, alert, and well-informed intel-

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lect recognised the extreme importance of perfecting the legislative machine as well as the superlative difficulty of the business. He knew well that the danger incident to democracy is anarchy, and while refusing to admit that free governments must be impotent governments, he was aware that there is great risk of their becoming so. A partisan Radical, therefore, he could not be. He rejected the dross alike in Radicalism and in Whiggism; and as your true partisan loves a system as much for its dross as for its massive ore, he gave offence both to Whigs and to Radicals.

We have been compelled to anticipate something of that which it will be our business to prove in the sequel of this paper, but it is as well that the reader should have an idea at once of our conception of Brougham. We return to our narrative.

His success at the Scotch Bar was not remarkable, and he longed for a wider and more distinguished sphere. In 1805 he established himself in London, having previously entered himself in Lincoln's Inn. His reputation had preceded him, and he was received with open arms in the best Whig circles. Intensely Scotch as he was in culture, demeanour, and accent, his immediate popularity at Holland House and the dinner-tables of the Whig aristocracy is a signal proof of his capacity to please and to shine in society. His activity, as usual, was prodigious. Law yielding little, he trusted for his supplies, beyond what his small estate in Westmoreland, where he placed his mother, afforded him, to his pen. Cockburn states positively that he asked and obtained £1000 in advance from the proprietors of the *Edinburgh Review*, and paid off the amount in articles. He joined Brookes's, and after spending the evening in some Whig mansion, would appear at the club in time to partake of the suppers which smoked there nightly, and at which, and the deep potations of claret which followed, he and a few other choice spirits kept it up till daylight.

The Whigs, though they admired, courted, and used him, were shy of bringing him into Parliament. When the Whig Ministers were turned out in 1807 he showed what he could do in the way of exerting himself for his friends. Lord Holland, who was not likely to be enthusiastic in praise of Brougham, says that, with little assistance, he in ten days "filled every bookseller's shop with pamphlets, most London newspapers and all country ones without exception with paragraphs, and supplied a large portion of the boroughs throughout the kingdom with handbills." Lord Campbell growls a little at this, but admits that "his fertility, copiousness, energy, and perseverance in completing a particular effort were certainly most stupendous." At last his aristocratic patrons gave him something more than "civility, promises, and hopes." The accession of Lord Henry Petty to the peerage left the seat for Camelford vacant

in the House of Commons, and Brougham was returned for it in the beginning of 1810.

He began quietly, and no plaudits greeted his maiden speech; but it was soon evident that he had cleared the horizon, and that his rise would be swift and sure. Campbell, so niggardly in his acknowledgments, declares that he attained the rank of leading member in the House of Commons more rapidly than any man in the present century. "Within four months from the day when he took his seat, without being supposed to be guilty of any presumption, he brought forward a motion for an address to the Crown on the subject of slavery, as if he had long been the acknowledged chief of a party." Wilberforce was now growing old, and gladly saw Brougham take up the running; the slave-trade had been declared illegal, but emancipation was still in the distance. Slavery, however, was but one of the subjects which Brougham made his own. On all the leading topics which occupied the attention of the country he spoke with commanding ability, and he was recognised as the very Hercules of debate. When the dissolution came he had been only two years in Parliament, yet he was already marked out for high office and if the Prince, on becoming Regent, had not played false to the Whigs, he might have been a Cabinet Minister at thirty-four. Whatever the Whigs had taught George IV. in their long and miserable coquettings with them, they assuredly had not taught him to respect them, and he had probably little compunction in throwing them over. Office being out of the question, the Whigs were, as usual, in no hurry to assist Brougham. Camelford having passed to a new proprietor, and the electors of the borough having been taken with the rest of the live stock, he lost his seat, and no Whig lord offered him another.

For a moment, indeed, his hopes rose high. The merchants of Liverpool, attracted by his magnificent and successful pleading against the Orders in Council,—by which a wise Government, with a view to spite Napoleon, played effectually into his hands,—invited him to stand for the town in the Whig interest. He complied with the request, and conducted the contest with unparalleled energy and determination. His speech to the electors while the event hung in the balance must be classed with the most effective hustings speeches ever delivered, but when it is read the art used in its composition becomes too manifest. We can see the arrangement of the rhetorical apparatus by which the audience were to be raised to the pitch of excitement at which the news of the commencement of war with America, which Brougham possessed, would tell with electrical effect, and we feel that the cries which rung through the hall of "God help us! God help us!" had been nicely calculated by the orator. The unmistakable elaboration of this speech, the certainty that Brougham had in view while preparing it

those models of ancient eloquence which he thought he could never study enough, affords a curious illustration of the methodic habit of his mind. An oration prepared for delivery before an academy of rhetoricians, in competition for a prize for declamation, could not have been more artfully prepared than this speech, composed when he had scarcely time to eat, and which no doubt appeared to his hearers to be born of the passion, the impetuosity, the impulse of the moment. He was, however, defeated, and the bitterness of his disappointment was deepened by the fact that the Whigs, while leaving him out in the cold, found a seat for Creevey, who had contested Liverpool at the same time. He did not return to Parliament until 1816, when he sat for Winchelsea, a pocket borough of the Earl of Darlington.

We have now reached the period of Brougham's connection with Queen Caroline. Not in any respect discreditable to him, but rather the reverse, for it gave occasion for the display of his talent, his courage, his disinterestedness, it is nevertheless the most dismal and melancholy episode in his career. What he did was well done. For the credit of humanity, for the credit of England, it was well that George was not allowed to crush Caroline of Brunswick. He had wronged that woman infinitely, and it is to the everlasting honour of rough John Bull that he was resolved to rebel rather than let the Prince give her one blow which she could be spared. But the slightest enthusiasm for poor Caroline is impossible. For all other unhappy queens some have entertained sentimental admiration, but for Caroline, with "her jigs and her junketings," as Thackeray says, her incurable and callous frivolity, who can feel any deeper compassion than is due to all wretchedness? By nature there was little that was bad about her, and not a little that might have turned to good. With an honest, firm, affectionate husband and a house full of children, she would have been a bustling, gossiping, effusive, wilful, but, on the whole, happy and devoted wife and mother. As wife of a king of England she would, we think, have failed under any circumstance; and the circumstances under which she was married to George were cruel and infamous. Brougham told Campbell that he wrote the peroration of his speech at the trial seventeen times over, but few will penetrate to the peroration through the foul horrors which the orator has to traverse, and which not even his burning rhetoric can relieve of their vulgarity. No man could have fought more gallantly or with finer talent for Caroline than Brougham, and yet it was not he that baffled George. It was the terrible frown on the face of the nation which was dark in the background, and which made the Regent, or at least his Ministers, quail. For the strength or the weakness of the evidence against her the public cared little. In point of fact, it was observed that the symptoms of insurrection became more decided when the testimony of the witnesses seemed to tell most powerfully to her disadvantage.

Once for all the people of England had resolved that George IV. should not assume, from the vices he had himself engendered, a new right to torment the woman whom he had degraded. Brougham's speech is not likely, as we have said, to be much read in future times, but his account of the whole matter in his article on George and Caroline, in the *Edinburgh Review*, can hardly, we think, sink into the oblivion towards which the report of the trial must steadily tend. That essay is one of the most masterly things that ever came from the pen of Brougham, and shows that if he had made literary composition the business of his life, in the same sense in which he made oratory the business of his life, he might have taken rank as a great writer. In the essay in question, he distinctly admits that Caroline could be justly accused of "incorrect demeanour" and "levities little suited to her station." But with what transcendent and amazing power does he depict the meanness, cruelty, and falsehood of George! Sternly just as Hallam, vivid as Carlyle, he concentrates the indignation and contempt of mankind upon the crowned but cowering thing, who shuddered at his father's name, who had not spirit enough to stand by the only woman he loved, and whose selfishness had festered into implacable cruelty. How grandly, closely, terribly comes on the charge of splendid, steel-gleaming words! We think of Scott's description of the charge of Napoleon's guard at Waterloo.

"On came the whirlwind, steel-gleams broke
Like lightning from the rolling smoke."

And yet Brougham pities George and leaves us pitying him, for we feel that to have become so base was in itself the cruellest punishment of fate.

One thing the Queen's trial did for Brougham;—it drew upon him the eyes of the whole British people. He had become probably the best-known man in England, and the most popular. Amid the acclamations of the country, he could feel himself superior to the hatred of the Court, and all men might perceive that, whoever might be the nominal head of the Whigs, he was the life and soul of the liberal cause. By the death of Queen Caroline he was opportunely freed from what might have become an embarrassing connection, and was able to throw his whole energies into the improvement of his parliamentary position, and the prosecution of those enterprises which, apart from party politics, and lying nearer his heart than any party concern, were the object of his ambition. It is in the ten years between 1820 and 1830 that he most illustriously plays that part of public man in a free country which has seldom, in the whole history of free institutions, been more nobly enacted. That he was ambitious is certain; but his was the ambition which is an invariable attri-

bute of healthy and masculine natures. He has himself spoken of the title of "great" as "the prize that all generous natures strive after." Can we conceive the title more worthily earned than by the citizen of such a country as England, who, impelled by the inspiration of moral ardour and intellectual power, scorning every art of the political intriguer, disdaining to avail himself of the cant and cries of the hour, refusing to subordinate his lofty aims as the servant of his country to the objects and chances of party warfare, with no instruments but those winged words in which eloquence ministers to genius, ascends to an eminence on which civilised mankind recognise him as his country's first orator, and the most zealous and efficient improver of her institutions? On blot after blot in the system of our affairs he laid his fiery finger, and the dead leaf fell. That his invective was severe, that his sarcasm was withering, that his vehemence at times approached to madness, is undeniable. "Brougham," says Wilson, describing him in those years, "is a volcano,—an eruption,—a devouring flame,—a storm,—a whirlwind,—a cataract,—a torrent,—a sea,—thunder, and an earthquake." The work he had to do could not be done in an altogether mild and inoffensive manner. When words have to rend the bolts of self-interest they must be winged with flame, and the reader may estimate for himself the interests which were arrayed against Brougham as the assailant of the abuses of charitable trusts, as the champion of the slave, as the reformer of the law. That it was he, more than any other man, who startled the European despots from their schemes for the repression of national liberty after the war, is but a small matter. What he did in shivering asunder the Holy Alliance would have made a reputation for another man; but it contributes little to the reputation of Brougham.

To his contemporaries of this period no part of his exertions seemed more daring or more difficult than his exertions in the cause of popular education. What are to us the platitudes and commonplaces of the subject, appeared to men in those days to be revolutionary novelties. The objection that the spread of intelligence among the people would endanger the constitution was seriously urged, and had great influence. "Let in more light!" cried Brougham. "That is the cure for the evil; and that is the answer to the objection. Be the dangers ever so great of instructing the people on that which it most concerns them to know,—be the hazards arising from the circulation of free opinions and the diffusion of political knowledge among the people a thousand times more imminent than they have ever been painted by alarmed and shortsighted men,—we cannot prevent the evil, be it ever so appalling, and are left to apply the only remedy. Let there be light!"

Some will perhaps say, with an expression between a sigh and a

sneer, that Brougham's tumultuous energy thrown into the cause of education has, after all, done us little good. We have our Mechanics' Institutes, we have the London University, we have seen the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge run its course and expire. Much good, say these scoffers, have they done us! Such cynicism may have a comforting effect upon those whose peace is concerned in their being able to reconcile conscience to indolence. But it is shallow in its account of the matter, and it is deeply unjust to Brougham. When the forest is cleared and the crop laid down, it is not wise to sneer although the blade is for a few years slender and sickly, and the harvest thin, or to make light of the toil of those who cut down the trees, and rooted out the stumps, and smoothed the ground. Our old fathers of the German woods recognised with honour two kinds of kings,—the man-subduing, war-waging kings, and the forest-felling kings. The homage paid to those kings who struck down the enemies of the tribe in battle does not appear to have been more profound than that paid to the kings who opened expanses in the ancient wood, cleared away the jungle, and let in the light of heaven. Brougham was a forest-felling king, and large breadths in the jungle of ignorance and prejudice fell to his axe. If the average intelligence of the population is at this hour in advance of what it was fifty years ago,—a fact which will not, we think, be disputed,—the change is in great measure due to Brougham; and he who increases the intelligence of a nation is its benefactor in a higher sense than he who conquers for it a thousand miles of territory. "The name of Henry Brougham," said one who was in the opposite political camp, but had the nobleness to see that this orator towered above the faction-fights of Whig and Tory,—“the name of Henry Brougham will be eminent in the history of England; and the great champion of the Education of the People is worthy to hear that name given by the gratitude of his compatriots to the first new-discovered star.”

Of the intrepidity of Brougham,—of his dauntless civic courage,—the noblest illustration is afforded by his achievements in law reform. Among the memorable words which he uttered in Parliament, few are more memorable, few more beautiful, striking, or true, than some which occur in his great speech on law reform, delivered in the Session of 1828. "It was the boast of Augustus," he said, "it formed part of the glare in which the perfidies of his earlier years were lost, that he found Rome of brick, and left it of marble; but how much nobler will be the sovereign's boast when he shall have it to say that he found law dear, and left it cheap; found it a sealed book, left it a living letter; found it the patrimony of the rich, left it the inheritance of the poor; found it the two-edged sword of craft and oppression, left it the staff of honesty, and the shield of innocence." He who would know the grinding agony of that oppression which law,

put in motion by money, could inflict upon the poor of England in the good old time, may read it in Godwin's "*Caleb Williams*." The book is in its best part a groan of deadly pain from the victims of fiendish cruelty, acting through the forms of law, obedient to the longest purse. The state of the Court of Chancery at the period is well known. "The bankrupt of the Court became the lunatic of the Court." Widows and children wailed and starved; estates mouldered, mansions fell, hearts were broken; but the fees came in, the system was venerable with antiquity, and all was well. Law, which to Milton's imagination, was as the locks of the king, symbol of his majesty, ornament of his person, had too literally become a baleful enchantment, by which injustice was formalised and made irresistible. Does any one exclaim that such a state of things was impossible in England? Does any one allege that the abuses of such a system must have brought upon it swift destruction? Alas! every abuse was a sucker to which some feeding animal of the "practitioner" species clung fast. "It is vain," says Goldwin Smith, "to appeal to these people to give up the abuses in order to save the system. What they care for is not the system, but the abuses." Would you understand the enmity of lawyers to Brougham? Would you estimate at their true value the sneers of the profession at his want of law? Recollect that his law-reforming eloquence was to fees as the scythe is to the clover. "Kill a man's family, and he may brook it; but keep your hand out of his breeches' pocket." Brougham commanded the profession to take its fangs out of the nation's throat, and not to continue battenning on the blood of the poor. In those old days to lose a debt was to lose it, and there an end; to begin a lawsuit about it was to run the risk of ruin. A great improvement has been effected; a change has been brought about worthy to be ranked among the most beneficent revolutions ever transacted in England; and for this revolution we are indebted principally to Brougham. He had coadjutors, some within Parliament, some without; but the main share of the work was his. To him we owe the County Courts; the idea was his, the impulse was his; and if he had left no other monument of his industry as a law reformer except the County Courts, he would have been entitled to the fervent gratitude of every thinking man in England. The system of criminal jurisprudence in the metropolis had almost reached a dead lock. Persons charged with offences might lie seven or eight months in prison before being brought to trial. Brougham simply and effectively set things right by extending the jurisdiction of the Old Bailey, and supplying it with an adequate staff of officials. The Judicial Committee of Privy Council, which, whatever its defects, is admitted to be a great improvement as a Court of ultimate ecclesiastical appeal upon what preceded it, owes to him its present constitution.

We have glanced at but a part of Brougham's activity in his character of servant of the English people, claiming, and to no inconsiderable extent obtaining, the support of all parties. At the same time he was doing a giant's work for the Whigs. In all the regular operations of the parliamentary campaign he bore a part, and to all the world, except "the steady aristocratic Whigs," he was the rightful chief of the Liberals. "The Whig party," says Campbell, "never took cordially to Brougham, nor Brougham to the Whig party." True,—for reasons which we have already seen. His sympathies were apt to lash out towards Radicals on this side and Conservatives on that, wherever he saw a true and able man or a sound idea; and, of course, on such occasions, the river would rise out of the channel of regular Whiggism and spread itself abroad in alarming inundation. He was the most loyal of those Whigs who lent their aid to Canning, and he saw and acknowledged the value of Peel. Of the particular Whig set he formed no flattering estimate, and he was not the man to disguise his feelings. He thought them exclusive and narrow-minded, and complained that they "were disposed to depress all the Liberals who would not abjectly serve in their clique." Unless the Whigs have been sorely belied, they have, as a party, offered far less encouragement to great commoners than the Tories. Brougham felt as a cuckoo in a nest of hedge-sparrows. "The Marquis of Tavistock he called 'Tavy,' Lord John Russell 'John,' the old Earl of Lauderdale 'Jack,' the present Earl of Derby 'Ned,' and the Right Hon. Edward Ellice 'the Bear.'" The hedge-sparrows, it is probable, would not like it.

The general election, on the accession of William IV., took place exactly at the time when the excitement of the country on the subject of Parliamentary Reform had been raised to fever-heat by the revolution which introduced constitutional monarchy in France. Brougham, who in the debates on Parliamentary Reform as in those on Catholic Emancipation, had greatly distinguished himself, was invited by the popular constituency of Yorkshire to represent it in Parliament. He agreed to contest the seat, and all England looked on with intense interest as he stepped into the arena. He had now passed his fiftieth year, and both physically and mentally he was in the meridian of his power. His exertions were on the usual scale; preternatural for an ordinary man;—for him glorious sport; and the result was that, amid the plaudits of generous men of all sections, he was returned member for Yorkshire. "The triumph was said to form a grand epoch in the history of Parliamentary representation."

Brougham's rightful place now was the Premiership. He was more capable than any man of heading a Government whose express duty, assigned it by the nation, was to reform the House of Commons. But

there were obstacles in the way, which, even if the Whigs had been loyal to him, might have proved insuperable. King William disliked him, having taken a grudge against him for his defence of Queen Caroline, and it is possible that the royal mind failed to appreciate his political importance. An attempt seems to have been made to put him off with the Attorney-Generalship, but though he had, we believe, magnanimity enough to support a liberal Government if he approved of their measures, even though they had given him no office, he would not accept an office which would have been a satire upon his merits and standing. Our conviction is that he was superior to the attractions of office to an extent for which he has never got credit; and that, in very truth, his deepest ambition was to serve his country with or without aggrandisement to himself. The Whigs, however, took it for granted that they had to choose between having him in the Cabinet and having him in opposition, and in a luckless moment they offered him the Great Seal. We shall not stay to inquire how he was beguiled into the mistake of accepting it. The issue might not have been so unfortunate if he had possessed any trace of that wisdom of the serpent which so abounded among the Whigs. It is marvellous that he did not see that, in the House of Commons he had the Greys and Melbournes at his mercy, while, in the House of Lords, it would be easy for them to dispose of him. There is not the slightest probability that the Whig leaders had at this moment an intention to shelve Brougham, but when he left the House of Commons he put himself in their power. His was the mistake, and he suffered for it; but, had he been a cautious player, he might still have made a good game.

One thing is certain, that neither Brougham himself nor the country in general perceived that he had made a false step, or had parted with the substance of power in taking his seat upon the woolsack. There is a remarkable passage in the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* which represents the general impression entertained throughout the kingdom of Brougham in capacity of Lord Chancellor. It is none the less to be trusted because it proceeded from the pen of Wilson, whose royal nature, Tory as he was, responded with glad sympathy and recognition to the greatness of Brougham. We know not how we can better place the picture of Brougham, as he then stood in the eyes of his countrymen, before our readers than by quoting the passage:—"Tickler: Brougham in his robes! Lord High Chancellor of England! Stern face and stalwart frame,—and his mind, people say, is gigantic. They name him with Bacon. Be it so! The minister he and interpreter of Nature. Henry Brougham, in the eyes of his idolators, is also an Edmund Burke. Be it so! At once the most imaginative and most philosophical of orators that ever sounded lament over the decline and fall of empires, while Wisdom, listening

to his lips, exclaimed, 'Was ne'er prophetic sound so full of woe!'—North: Come, come, Tickler; none of your invidious eulogies on the man of the people.—Tickler: There he sits, a strong man; not about to run a race.—North: But who has run it, and distanced all competitors. There is something great, Tickler, in unconquerable and victorious energy.—Tickler: A man of many talents he, some of them seeming almost to be of the highest order. Sword-like acuteness, sunlike perspicacity.—North: And sledge-hammer-like power.—Tickler: There is a wicked trouble in his keen grey eyes.—North: No. Restless, but not unhappy.—Tickler: Scorn has settled on that wide-nostril'd proboscis.—North: No. It comes and goes; the nose is benevolent.—Tickler: Do you say there is no brass on that hard forehead?—North: I see but bone; and though the brain within is of intellect 'all compact,' the heart that feeds it burns with passions not unheroic.—Tickler: King of them all,—ambition.—North: The last infirmity of noble minds.—Tickler: No. You misunderstand;—you misrepresent Milton. He spoke of the love of fame.—North: So do I. In Brougham,—do him justice,—the two passions are one, and under its perpetual inspiration he has scorned delights and lived laborious days! till, with all his sins, by friend and foe he is held to be, in his character of statesman, the first man in England."

If this was the estimate of a Tory, need we say that liberal England, beyond the inner circle of fastidious and aristocratic Whiggism, saw in Brougham its chieftain and its prince? For some years he was the most powerful man in the United Kingdom. At the most critical stages in the history of the Reform Bill his promptitude, his insight, his utter fearlessness, were the salvation of the cause. His colleagues caught the contagion of his eager courage; and his eloquence,—“overpowering, matchless, and immortal,” as the “Times” characterised it,—was as a banner unfurled above their heads in presence of the nation, beneath which they marched to assured victory. It was to him that the reformers throughout the country looked for directions in the paroxysm of popular excitement, when a hundred thousand men were ready to march from Birmingham upon London. At the coronation of William, when he appeared first after the royal dukes, “the plaudits were so loud and general,” says Campbell, whose jealous ears would not exaggerate the sound, “as not only to make the vaulted roofs of the sacred edifice to resound, but almost to shake its massive walls.” When Lyndhurst thought that by a clever manœuvre of parliamentary generalship he had “checkmated Grey” and baffled the reformers, “Brougham,”—the witness is again Campbell,—“by the general consent of the Cabinet, dictated the course to be pursued.” The King gibbed, kicked, put his head between his legs, and for one whole week thought that he might get the Whigs

into the mud and Lyndhurst and the Duke into their place; but Brougham enjoyed the ticklish riding, sat firm and fast, comprehended with nice precision the state of the field, and won the race. The Reform Bill became law.

Brougham's fame filled England, and gleamed out on either hand to the Continent and to America. Dedications were showered upon him; strangers flocked from the provinces to see him; the Court of Chancery, usually desolate, was crowded to suffocation when he sat; his carriage, when he went abroad, was surrounded with a cheering multitude; "the Italian image boys gave orders for grosses of Lord Brougham in plaster-of-Paris faster than they could be manufactured;" and the popular press, headed by the "*Times*," joined in chorus to sing his praise.

It is recorded that, when the maidens of Israel went forth with timbrels and dances, saying, "Saul hath slain his thousands and David his ten thousands," the gratification of Saul was not unmixed. Earl Grey was the best of men and of Prime Ministers, but it was not in human nature that he should preserve perfect equanimity when thus visibly eclipsed by his Lord Chancellor. It must be added that Brougham, though good-humoured, good-hearted, totally incapable of malignant hatred, was both choleric and heedless, and had no tolerance for the hesitations and scruples of weaker minds. He confessed, long afterwards, that when in office he had had more than his share of power; adding, by way of palliation,—what was another form of confessing the offence,—that he had done more than his share of work. Lord Grey was probably well pleased when a hitch occurred in the matter of the Irish Coercion Bill, and Lord Althorp sent in his resignation. Grey forwarded it with his own to the king, and considered the Whig administration at an end.

But he had not calculated the possible effects of the resolution, daring, and resource of Brougham. The Chancellor conferred with the other members of the Government, pointed out to them that the king could not get rid of a Cabinet supported by a majority like theirs in the House of Commons, and showed that, even after the retirement of Earl Grey, a crew was available which could work the ship. Was this, it will be asked, fair to Grey? The question might be discussed at great length, but there are one or two simple considerations which tell powerfully in favour of Brougham. In the first place Earl Grey appears to have acted without consulting his Cabinet. In the second place it is not to be believed that such men, to mention no others, as Lords Lansdowne, Palmerston, and Russell, would have acceded to Brougham's views if a shade of dishonour had rested on the course he recommended. In the third place, Earl Grey's resignation under the circumstances was, in effect, though not in intention, either a failure of duty to the party and the country, or

a roundabout way of getting quit of Brougham. The Whigs, with such a majority, were bound to carry on the Government. If the Whig Prime Minister declined to do so, the party were under no obligation to make his weakness their own, and the other leaders, Brougham above all, were entitled, nay, were required, to raise the standard which was falling from his hand. If Grey's object was to reconstitute his Cabinet, shaking off Brougham, the latter had, we think, a right to consider himself of as much importance to the cause as Lord Grey, and to baffle his scheme by more prompt, skilful, and decisive generalship. "Brougham," says Campbell, "has often told me that at this time he had himself the offer of being Prime Minister, but that he positively declined it, and named Melbourne." There seems to be no reason whatever for doubting the correctness of his statement. If his colleagues remained in office at his suggestion, it was natural that they should expect him to be head of the Cabinet. The only difficulty is to understand why he refused the premiership. Probably he felt that he was disliked and distrusted by the regular Whig set, and thought that he could exert more real power, and do greater service to the country, if he were not the nominal chief. He was, we think, wrong. The excitement of the country was still great. A bold and stirring policy, a policy of action, a policy with law reform, ecclesiastical reform, educational reform, and even,—what Brougham in 1832 admitted to be no unreasonable idea,—with further parliamentary reform, for its watchwords, would have been supported by the overwhelming enthusiasm of the nation, and would have enabled him to drag the finality Whigs at his chariot-wheels. All his power lay in action; for dissimulation of any kind he had no talent; and wanting the art to make a nominal chief believe that the reins were in his own hands, or that the world believed them to be in his own hands, he was sure to give mortal offence to the minister whom he patronised.

It was peculiarly unfortunate for Brougham that his brother James died about this time. In the zenith of a "sultry and unwholesome popularity,"—to use a fine expression of Hazlitt's,—he needed the tempering influence of some cool, kind friend in whom he absolutely trusted, and such a friend he had possessed in his brother James. When he required, more than at any period of his career, to walk warily, he was deprived of a counsellor who was constantly at his side, who knew him perfectly, and who could exorcise the mocking spirit that had sometimes turned our Ajax, from his youth up, into a fool. Brougham's indiscretion and extravagance leapt all bounds. He treated his colleagues as schoolboys, was brusque and loud in the royal closet itself, and set all the world laughing by his antics in Scotland. His eccentricities at Rothiemurchus, where he romped with some English ladies so uproariously that they took the liberty of stealing the Great Seal from him, and making him grope for it blindfold about a room, while

one of them sat at a piano and let him know, by playing low or playing loud, whether he was far from the object or near it, incensed King William, who was particular as to matters affecting his dignity.

In the autumn of 1834, soon after Brougham returned to London from his luckless Scotch "progress," the Whigs were dismissed and a Tory Government installed. Peel took the helm to gratify the king and to raise the courage of his party, but he knew that he could not retain office. The Whigs were recalled in April, 1835. Melbourne had made up his mind that he would never again sit in a Cabinet with Brougham. But though the applauding thunders of the press had turned into a howl of vituperation, and though all the world had been mocking at Ajax as he cut and scarred himself in his craze, the Whigs were afraid to incur his wrath. They put him off with assurances that the king had a personal objection to him, which might be overruled one day, but which must for a time be humoured. The inveterate dislike of William to Brougham was no fable; but it is indubitable that Melbourne could have brought him into the Cabinet by making his introduction a condition of its taking office. The Great Seal was put into commission, and simple-hearted Brougham vehemently supported the Government in the Upper House. But the arrangement of dividing the duties of the Chancellor was severely attacked, and Melbourne, without a word of explanation to Brougham, appointed Lord Cottenham Chancellor. "In my opinion," says Campbell, "Brougham was atrociously ill-used on this occasion," and the manner in which the Whigs threw him off "showed disingenuousness, cowardice, and ingratitude."

It was indeed an overwhelming reverse of fortune, and Brougham was almost broken-hearted. He felt the manner in which the blow was inflicted still more than the blow itself, and told Campbell "with tears in his eyes," that if Melbourne had been frank with him, he might have done with the Great Seal what he pleased. He was never again in office; but his career was by no means closed. Disconnecting himself from party, he lent his assistance to every salutary measure which was brought forward by Whig or by Tory, and continued to be the greatest of legal and educational Reformers. After the first shock was over his dissatisfaction with his position was not extreme. Every student of his works is aware that he entertained profound misgivings as to the whole system of party government, as it has existed in England for the last seventy years or upwards. That the Whigs should at one time have bitterly assailed, and at another vociferously supported, Queen Caroline, offended his sense of justice; and his pure patriotic instinct rebelled against the idea that the country should never be served by her ablest men at the same time, because one set called themselves Tories and the other Whigs. The wound which he had received in the

house of his friends cut him to the very heart ; but what he has said of Melbourne in print is chivalrously noble ; and whoever it was that did a good stroke of work for England,—Melbourne, Russell, Peel, Aberdeen, Derby, Palmerston,—could, to that extent, count upon his support.

In the long "sunset of his years,"—he died in 1868, at the age of ninety,—it was his joy to receive any old friend to the hospitalities of Brougham or Caen, and whenever it was possible to do a kindness he made himself happy by doing it. To his relatives he was always tenderly true. He was fond of a woman of little children. He lived till the generation which followed his ear with acclamations to the Capitol, and then, with yells of fury, hurled him from the Tarpeian rock, had passed away, and articulate censure and intelligent appreciation were alike lost in a vague hum of melancholy praise.

Even clever writers have of late almost incredibly mistaken the place which he must occupy in English history. We are told that where he ought to have stood in the records of the century, there will be a blur. If so, the impetuous and intrepid chief, whom all England, in 1832, saluted as the first of Parliamentary Reformers, will be omitted by historians, and the lightnings of eloquence which, for a quarter of a century, glittered and flashed in the Parliamentary atmosphere, every flash striking some injustice or abuse, will cast no illumination on the face of him who wielded them. We are told that, aiming at greatness in all things, he was great in nothing ; a mere universal smatterer. This charge we shall take into consideration when we are shown ten pages of his writing which do not bear the stamp of masculine sense, and superb and crushing power. That he could read in the highest departments of mathematical and physical science, that his command of Latin and of Greek was such as to make the study of the literatures of Rome and Greece a recreation to him, that he knew the principal languages of modern Europe, cannot be called in question ; but for his royally-endowed intellect, passionately delighting in knowledge from the hour that its energies awoke, there was in this no straining, no superficiality, no pretence. The frigate-bird, sailing the deeps of heaven at eighty leagues an hour, is not to be judged by the same rules as the noddly or sea-mew, fishing wearily in the shallows. Say that no man can be superlative in more than one department,—Brougham had his speciality. As an orator, as a public man in a great free country, he was pre-eminent. His life, he truly said, was "passed in the Senate and the Forum," and the more subtle graces of written style he did not attain. If he could not translate the Oration on the Crown with the exactness of an Oxonian expert, he called the spirit of Demosthenes from the grave and incarnated it in the British House of Commons. Villemain pronounced him the best modern interpreter of Demosthenes. In his books we lack repose, variety, play of light

and shade. He is too uniformly trenchant, logical, grave; we wish he would even babble a little, so it were of green fields. But he knew this. There is pathos in his allusion, in the preface to his history of the House of Lancaster, to what he had foregone for the sake of public life. He had sacrificed himself for England; this is the very fact; and England has not found a block of marble to enshrine his form. Let us not, however, be supposed to say that his books are valueless. Apart from their style, we hardly know how their value can be over-rated. No writer whom we know,—and Mr. Carlyle's masterpiece is present to our thoughts,—has given so clear, profound, coherent, and exhaustive an account of the causes of the French Revolution. Even after Mr. Carlyle had shown us the "sea-green incorruptible," the power of Maximilien Robespierre remained to us an insoluble mystery until we saw the very glimpse of his eye, and heard the very tones of his voice, in the sketch of him by Brougham. As for Brougham's deepest views on party government, on the codification of the statutes, on the prevention of litigation, and so forth, the nineteenth century will expire before we see their much fine gold separated from their small admixture of dross and adopted into our constitutional system. When this has been done, England may perhaps spare from her wealth enough to place before the eyes of her children in marble the image of this great civic hero.

IN BABYLAND.

"NURSERY, Sir?" said an affable policeman; "first turning to the left,—house with brown wire-blind, green shutters, and three steps." The guardian of the public peace had evidently an eye for colour, or he might have saved some needless scrutiny of doors and windows by simply mentioning that an inscription on the house-front would enlighten any one, capable of reading his mother-tongue in six-inch letters, as to the object of his search. The idea of a public nursery is not yet so familiar to the British mind as to be wholly dissociated with the florist's premises, and that, probably, is the reason why the institution further invites attention to its speciality by a notice on either side of its doorway, to the following effect,—“Children under three years, one penny; Children over three years, twopence.”

“Twopence!” we exclaim in our most scathing tone, as we think what it has cost to fetch up our little Jack to his present form. “If they pretend to say that they can keep children for twopence a day, it is all rubbish;” and then we fall to, musing upon the table exploits

of certain four-year-olds of our acquaintance, and become hopelessly entangled in mental arithmetic as to how many diurnal twopences would content our own nursery baker and milkman, let alone draper, shoemaker, coal merchant, doctor, and the rest, not forgetting Jane's wages, and a weekly tribute to dyspepsia in the shape of lollipops and cakes.

So we pull the bell with a savage energy, that is meant to record our fixed conviction that any one who offers to carry out the nursery programme of feeding, clothing, and tending youngsters as aforesaid, must do it on baby-farming principles, and get mighty little by the job after all.

Our virtuous indignation has hardly had time to explode itself before the door is opened by a moon-faced girl, in a clean print dress and closely-fitting cap, suggestive of French or Flemish markets, and tied, —where all good honest caps were wont to be tied,—under the chin. She looks most provokingly good-tempered as we make her the bearer of our card and compliments to the Lady Superior, with a request that we may be permitted to inspect her institution for babies, adding a touch of irony to the last expression, which, we flatter ourselves, would have found its way between the joints of the harness if its point had not been turned in process of transmission. Yes; we see our folly now. You might just as well aim your last new joke straight at the head of a rhinoceros as to hope to impress that dumpling of a serving-maid with a sense of anything but doing good-humouredly whatever her hand finds to do.

"Please to step in," is all that the occasion demands; so here we are across the border of babyland, or, to speak more correctly, seated on a deal chair with rather more than the proper share of knots in its composition, and surveying a room which boasts no other furniture than a table and a man-of-war,—the former as clean as if a carpenter's plane had that moment been run across it, and the latter large enough to make us wonder whether babies are mast-headed for bad behaviour. A ticket affixed to the rigging, which looks bewilderingly complete, sets forth that it is a perfect model of H.M.S. —, presented by the Captain on "paying-off;" and we are relieved by being further informed that it is to be sold for the benefit of the establishment. With a fourteen-feet model of a frigate in the front parlour, we wonderingly speculate upon the treasures of nature and art that may be awaiting our inspection in the upper stories, and have barely time to choke down an agueish sensation that always has possessed us whenever a personage of the "Mother Superior" order was about to be in presence, when the door opens, and a middle-aged lady in a secular-looking bonnet and shawl advances with a cheery greeting, and enquires whether we would like to see the nursery. That, we politely intimate, is the object of our visit. So she briskly throws off her shawl, and declares herself ready to attend us. As she

hands us the visitors' book, in which we are invited to inscribe our names,—a little precaution, possibly, against evil-minded strangers departing with a baby or so concealed about their persons,—we have a moment's leisure to look into her soft, grey eyes, and begin to think that if, by any lucky accident, we have caught the Mother Superior of the baby-home disguised in the habiliments of the world, the lines of the youngsters will have fallen in pleasant places. If ever a face in this world could tell its meaning the one before us spoke of a mild and tender rule. So we become quite daring on the strength of having to deal with nothing more appalling than a matronly lady, the sweetness of whose address might make a hermit sociable, and presently enquire if the Mother Superior is likely to be visible within any reasonable limit of time.

"I am the manager," replied our new acquaintance, with just enough emphasis to show that there was plenty of latent primness beneath that quiet smile, "and shall be very glad to show you everything that you would like to see."

Something, then, was gained in finding that our conductress was not a dragon.

"But are there no sisters?" we go on to enquire, fully persuaded in our own mind that a baby-home must needs be conventual, and that we are about to be presented to a string of the dapper nuns which Anglicanism has learnt to rear.

"No; this is entirely a secular work, presided over by myself, who have a husband and children in the next street. A number of ladies help in regular rotation, but the chief duties of the house are performed by paid nurses."

"And do you find that the plan answers?"

"You shall go over the premises, and then, perhaps, you may be able to judge for yourself."

"We had better begin at the back," continued our guide, as we bowed our acknowledgment of the practical wisdom of her last reply, "for it is there that the children are received, and you would like to see our work from the beginning." So we stepped out into a courtyard, which opened by a swing-door into a net-work of alleys, where vice and wretchedness strove for the mastery.

"But is this the right neighbourhood for such an institution?" we somewhat doubtfully enquired.

"I am not at all surprised at your question," said our conductress.

"It was rather a dangerous experiment at first, when we began house-keeping in an adjoining lane, where every foot of ground has its own tale of misery and guilt. But the very worst characters soon learnt to respect us, and, during the fifteen months that we resided there, I never heard of a case in which any one belonging to the nursery was molested. So far from it, indeed, that I have often seen quite a little crowd of the most reckless and abandoned of our neighbours gathered

round our door when the infants were being put into the perambulators for their daily walk, and testifying in their own rough way that they felt a kindly interest in what was going on."

"Then why did you leave your old quarters?" we enquired.

"Because we had outgrown our space,—and very sorry we all were to go. It was like leaving one's birth-place. But that which in early days was an experiment, conducted with some half-dozen children, soon grew to such a size that the only choice lay between turning away candidates for admission and enlarging our borders. And when it comes to that," continued our new friend, with an irresistible smile, "it was easy to decide what was to be done; and here we are in our new home."

At this moment the swing-door of the yard was pushed open with a jerk, and a slatternly woman without a bonnet, and leading a child of about three years old, shambled across to a bell-handle conspicuously placed on the back wall of the establishment. A sturdy pull was immediately answered by a sliding panel being drawn back, through which the child was handed to a nurse, who at once saluted grimy little Fred as an ancient friend. The regulation penny having been dropped into an adjoining money-box, the ill-favoured woman took her departure to spend the rest of the day,—as our guide informed us,—among a circle of congenial friends in a neighbouring tap-room.

"How comes it, then," we enquire, "that she is careful enough about her child to bring it here?"

"Oh! she began to do it when she had some washing, and now that she has fallen into the wretched state in which you see her, a kind person pays for the poor little fellow. You see how dirty and tattered he is."

We certainly had observed these points, and had likewise noticed that the urchin was by no means as reluctant to leave his own mother as in duty bound he should have been. His unfilial behaviour entirely destroyed the effect of a jokelet that we had been privately preparing, as to the propriety of the trap-door being labelled *Bochim*, by reason of the infant tears that must needs bedew it. But not a drop did Master Freddy shed. So we were obliged, somewhat constrainedly, to enquire whether a good deal of howling did not, as a rule, celebrate matutinal importations.

"Not at all," said our conductress. "A new child is sure to cry on his first admission, and now and then he may make others discontented for an hour or two. But, generally speaking, he is so glad to find himself among toys and playmates, that he gives us no kind of trouble. We have had one or two fractious children, to be sure, who had been spoilt at home; but tact and patience in the end prevail."

"Tact and patience!" we murmur to ourselves, and wonder whether the terms include those shakings and bumpings which our

invaluable Jane-of-the-nursery upholds as the sovereign remedy for all infantine frailties and disasters whatsoever.

"By far the worst thing that we have to deal with," our kindly informant goes on to say, "is the use of foul language by little dots that are hardly able to lip the abomination that rises to their lips."

"Taught by their parents," we suggest, mindful of our dragged friend of the back-yard.

"Exactly. Naturally enough the children pick up the most common and emphatic scraps of the household conversation, and as these are mostly curses, the result is soon told. This is by no means confined to the lowest class. A few days ago a neatly-dressed child of two years old was brought in, and set us all a-blaze with the rapidity and fierceness of its oaths. On enquiry it turned out that the father was a soldier who stood well in his regiment, but that the mother had justified a doubtful reputation by running away from her young family."

"And leaving the baby on your hands?"

"No;—that never happened but once. The children are always fetched with exemplary punctuality. From seven in the morning to seven in the evening are our hours; and, if they stay over the time, a penny fine is charged. But that is very rare, and the house is generally clear for scrubbing by a few minutes after seven."

"And what was the single exception that you spoke of?"

"Oh, it was a poor French woman, who had probably taken it into her head that our nursery might be improved by the addition of a foundling hospital; and so, by way of initiating the movement, she slipped away across the water, leaving her infant behind."

"And now you are saddled with it for life," was all the consolation that at the moment occurred to us.

"Well, that is more than we can say. But we could not allow the poor little thing to stay all night in the nursery, for it would interfere with the duties of the house, and set up a precedent which it might not always be convenient to follow. We see, however, that he is well cared for, and some day or other we may complete our founder's design by including an orphanage in our premises."

But here we are inside the nursery walls,—not *via* the baby-trap, but, as be seems our figure, through the back-door which opens to nothing but a written order from the ruling powers. Yes,—and here is our little Freddy again, up to his middle in a warm-bath, and splashing and blowing like a young porpoise.

The room, like everything else in the house, is as clean as incense soap and sand can make it. The floor is bare,—it would be a shame to cover up anything so white,—and the furniture consists of three or four zinc baths of various sizes, and about as many chairs. Each child is brought in here immediately on its arrival, and its clothes are taken off, tied up in a bundle, and hung on a peg against

the wall, with a ticket attached to them corresponding with the number borne by their owner on the nursery books. Its name and address, it should be observed, are entered in a ledger, and, when they can be obtained, the occupation and wages of the parents.

"And do you make no distinction of religious denomination?"

"None whatever. In the course of a twelvemonth all forms of believers,—and of unbelievers, too, for the matter of that,—find representatives within our walls. No child is rejected on any ground whatever,—unless there is a suspicion of a cutaneous disorder, in which case he is kept back for medical inspection."

We have arrived just in time to see our friend Freddy's scanty and, we are bound to add, cloudy garments, folded together with as much ceremony as if they were owned by the blood-royal, and to superintend the rubbing and combing that succeed the bath. This done, a complete set of just such clothes as the child of a bettermost kind of mechanic might wear are produced, and our little friend is transformed into as clean and healthy a sample of his kind as the most exacting connoisseur in baby points would desire to see.

The bathing operation, it should be mentioned, is dexterously conducted by a strapping girl of sixteen or so, attired in precisely the kind of dress that every nurse, who does not aim at sinking her own identity in a feeble imitation of drawing-room skirts and ribbons, might copy with advantage. A close cap, cut after a French model, and setting off to amazing advantage a pair of ruddy cheeks, a coloured print frock and a white apron, reaching from the shoulders to the feet, with list slippers worn over ordinary shoes, make up a seemly and serviceable costume.

Master Freddy's toilet being now complete, and a parting touch having been administered to a favourite curl on the top of his head, the nurse catches him in her arms, and carries him up-stairs,—for babyland proper begins on the first-floor, and we have hitherto only been skirting the borders. As we prepare to follow, we notice that the bath-room is adorned with a double row of little bundles, like that belonging to Freddy, which are dangling from the walls. These are the clothes of some five-and-thirty little ones up-stairs, whose ablutions have already been performed with Mohamedan precision.

"Are they not occasionally in a very sad state?" we somewhat nervously enquire, as we point to bundle No. 21, which is immediately taken down for our inspection.

"Very bad indeed," replies our conductress. "This is about an average specimen." So we whip out note-book and pencil with the following result:—

Shirt—Extensively damaged in front; colour approaching that of weak coffee.

Petticoat—Of some material that might once upon a time have claimed kindred with flannel.

Body garment—Fabric and colour undetermined.

Frock—Of spotted calico, dirty, torn, and burnt in front with a cinder; the product of the same casualty, most likely, that had befallen the shirt.

Add a faded velvet hat,—genus, pork-pie,—and a tiny alpaca cape, and the inventory of No. 21's personal equipment is complete.

"But there is no smell in the room," we remark, in a half-apologetic sort of way; "and really——"

We were about further to explain that we had never had the privilege of so closely inspecting the component parts of a miniature scarecrow, when the good-humoured eye of our guide told us that she had anticipated our meaning; so we stopped short, and she merely said,—“We are never at all troubled with offensive smells.”

Satisfied with this oracular response, we were clearly of opinion that the secret must be worth knowing, with five-and-thirty bundles of rags hanging from the walls.

The house clothes in which the children are always dressed on admission,—from the long robe of a six-weeks' infant to the frock and pinafore of a sturdy youngster of as many summers,—we subsequently discovered to be of every colour known to the drapery bazaar. They are under the charge of a lady who makes the wardrobe her special business, and reigns supreme over drawers and presses that might supply a moderate-sized town with baby-clothes for a twelvemonth. Nearly the whole are presents, some of them memorials of little darlings that never lived to want them, and not a few bearing tokens of having done duty in lordly nurseries. Every article, we notice, is neatly marked “The Good Shepherd.” No attempt is made to enforce uniformity either of shape or texture,—a very sensible regulation, which avoids the distressing air of monotony which the adoption of a single type of dress must necessarily ensure.

“We like bright colours,” said our conductress; “they are good for children; and we never allow black or sombre tints even in the gowns of our nurses.”

Any stores of wisdom that might have distilled from our lips in recognition of the prudence of this sumptuary enactment were unfortunately lost to posterity by a circumstance apparently so trivial as the opening of a door. The truth is that our guide, who was a few inches in front, had no sooner shown herself on the threshold of a large room on the first-floor, than a crowd of little urchins of all sizes, shapes, and colours, came tumbling towards her in such confusion that our majestic legs, vested in a holiday specimen of the tailor's art, became an impromptu breakwater for the infant tide. A couple or so, beaten out of time by their seniors, are performing some serpentine evolutions on the floor, and are spared the waste of a good deal of power by the lady of the house catching them up in her arms

and administering a good kiss all round. Here was a nursery "row" with a vengeance! But everybody was in high good-humour, and there was no pinching, or screaming, or kicking,—no, nor sulking either. It was right-down fun, and nothing else. So when our guide had bestowed a recognition upon the most irrepressible of her friends, and had fondled half-a-dozen or so who demanded instant hugging, we were presented in due form to the head-nurse. And here let us at once relieve our minds by chronicling that the mere appearance of this functionary,—supposing that she sits in a chair all day, like a Chinese idol, and did nothing,—would be a permanent guarantee for the easy good-nature which is the dominant feature of the place. If the roundest and rosiest housewife that Dutchman ever painted were suddenly to step out of the canvas and plant herself in the midst of a group of romping children; and if, moreover, instead of being stolid and lazy, she were to roll round the room in merry pursuit of her vivacious little charge, some idea might be gained of the quaint and cheery personage that now bobbed a curtsy in acknowledgment of our presence.

There are three under-nurses we ascertained;—one a middle-aged woman, who bears rule in the nether regions amidst a perpetual savour of soap-suds and flat-irons; for every article that is used in the house is washed on the premises. The others are active girls of eighteen or twenty, who are undergoing a course of special training to fit them for nursery work in private families.

The room in which we are now standing is large and airy; but, with the exception of some highly-coloured prints upon the walls, as bare of furniture as those upon the basement floor. It does not even boast a table,—a circumstance that grievously perplexes us when we are told that all the meals are eaten here. Why even the conventional baby-chair, without which,—on the authority of our nursery-Jane,—no creditable establishment is complete, is not to be discovered! But stop; there must be some mystery in a kind of rail, about a foot high, which runs along one side of the room, and fences off a strip of floor,—say a yard and a half in width; and as at this moment one of the nurses is seating a row of children upon the ground with their backs against the wood-work, whilst an eager and expectant air pervades the line of upturned faces, we are evidently in the fair way of getting at an important secret of the baby-home. Twenty pair of little hands are now prettily joined together in an attitude of devotion as the head-nurse repeats a short grace, and the Amen has hardly died away when a kitchen-maid makes her appearance with a tray of steaming basins. This, then, is the "manger," where the lambs of the Good Shepherd are called together to eat. We are, of course, invited to taste the dinner, which turns out to be Scotch broth,—none of your grease and water, with a few lumps of bread floating disconsolately on the top, but a savoury compound, in which

meat and vegetables have been used with no niggard hand. Having duly certified our approval, one of the nurses passes down the row of children, basin in hand, administering a spoonful to each as she goes. There appears to be no limit to the meal, except the inability of the diners to eat any more, for the patient attendant moves quietly up and down the line until little heads are shaken in sign of having had enough. Grace is then said again, the youngsters are hoisted over the rail, crumbs and spots are carefully wiped from the floor, and dinner is complete.

Breakfast and tea, we are told, are managed in exactly the same manner, milk and bread and butter being substituted for broth, or whatever else may compose the dinner, with the occasional addition of biscuits, cake, and even eggs. This is independent of any chance supplies that may be imported by sympathetic visitors. Thus, then, three substantial meals,—the food being in all cases of the best procurable quality,—are allotted to each child, besides special provision for delicate cases.

"You undertake the charge of sickly children, then?"

"Oh! dear, yes," replied our conductress. "It is a kind of work that we rather lay ourselves out for. A great number of children die in infancy through sheer mismanagement. Look at these twins," she continued, pointing to a sallow pair who were clinging to the nurse's skirts; "they are not much to boast of even now; but when they came in a few weeks ago they were nothing but skin and bone. Regular meals and careful nursing have done something for them; but it is more than doubtful whether we shall be able to rear them."

Looking at the parchment-coloured skin stretched tight across the temples, and the ears standing out at right angles behind cheek-bones that might have graced a monkey, it certainly did seem very doubtful indeed.

"And have you lost many children?" is a question that the contemplation of the ghastly twins seems inevitably to suggest.

"Do you mean by death?"

"Yes."

"Very few indeed. Not more than seven or eight, perhaps, since we started, three years and a half ago. An accident we have never had; and our deaths have been chiefly caused by bronchitis or scarlet fever."

"But you do not admit cases of known infection."

"No, we do not. They are carried to our child's hospital, which is not far off; where we have a resident nurse, who does nothing but attend to sick cases; and our physician takes them all under his care."

But while the manager is imparting these items of information, sleep is becoming the order of the day. Towel and basin in hand, a

nurse has chased into a corner as many of the youngsters as she can catch,—like a shepherd making short dives among his flock,—and when mouths and fingers have been purified, the smaller children are led into an adjoining room, which has a space railed off, from end to end, into which a mattress is fitted. In other respects it is exactly like the “manger” of the eating-room. Along this the children are now laid, side by side,—heads to the wall and feet to the rail; and when they can be induced to cease their game of romps, and shut their eyes, with as much assumption of seriousness as if an afternoon nap were a solemn obligation that they owed to society, blankets are spread over the row; and if you peep into the darkened room ten minutes afterwards, the chances are that pretence has given way to reality, and that they are all sound asleep. A curly-wigged head may now and then pop up to see what is the matter, but for an hour to come silence reigns in babyland. The elder children, who are supposed to have outgrown the post-meridian snooze, are marched off to the infant-school,—the charge of which is included in the daily twopence,—till tea-time; while a select knot, who, for some reason best known to themselves, will neither sleep nor learn, are busily engaged on the floor of the eating-room in architectural experiments with a box of wooden bricks.

“But the babies?” we somewhat nervously enquire, for all our infant specimens had hitherto shown a decided capacity for chasing us across rooms and down passages at a good round trot; and a suspicion had begun to dawn upon us that the nursery was, after all, only a sort of easy-going infant-school, where, by some happy coincidence, everybody was particularly clean, good-tempered, and full of romps.

“Have you any real babies? Like,—like——” We falter, not knowing exactly how to get out of the mess into which a perverse habit of asking questions was forcing us headlong.

“Like these, do you mean?” enquired our guide, as she opened the door of another room and revealed one, two, three, four, five, six wicker cradles, as white as if they had that very morning been washed in milk; each of which had its tiny occupant nestling among bed-clothes that would do credit to the best arranged private nursery that it was ever our fortune to see.

“Fit for a prince, madam,” was all that we could say; and for once, at least, that somewhat hyperbolic form of praise did not express a word too much.

A nurse was seated in a rocking-chair, engaged in that complicated and,—as it always seemed to us,—perilous operation, familiarly known among matrons as “giving the bottle,” while a precocious youngster on a pillow at her feet, was with much gravity and deliberation administering a similar instrument to himself.

The number of entrances for the day we ascertained by personal

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inspection to be thirty-five, all told, and this seemed to be quite as many as the house-room and nursing strength could fairly undertake.

"We have a good deal of valuable help," our conductress went on to say, as we began to calculate whether babyland would not have to enlarge its borders before it could safely think of new candidates for admission. "There are several ladies, as I explained before, who visit the nursery in rotation, and set the paid attendants free for a walk, or some business connected with the house."

"But is not this arrangement liable to interfere with the daily routine of duty?"

"Not in the least. The effect is good both upon the nurses and the children. It prevents the work from degenerating into mere mechanical drudgery, and keeps up the interest of the little ones by the constant sight of changing faces. Not that there is any lack of amusement," continued our kindly guide, as she pointed to an attendant who was now strewing the floor with all kinds of toys,—puzzles, dolls, picture-books, balls, horses, sheep, and the rest,—waiting for the little sleepers to awake.

"But you do not pretend that all this can be done for a penny, or even twopence, a day?"

"No; certainly not. In the first place nearly all the toys and clothes are presents; and a kind lady sends us several quarts of new milk every week straight from her own cow. But making fair allowance for all contributions, each child costs us something like sixpence a day."

"Then you must have had quite a little capital to begin with."

"Not at all. We started with exactly a pound in hand; and to prevent running into debt, we determined to balance our accounts once a week. No sooner was it spread abroad that we were trying to do something for the infants of the poor in a street that no respectable woman would care to enter, than people seem to have been seized with the desire of seeing what we were doing. So visitors began to arrive, and as none of them came empty-handed, we soon got on well enough."

"And your income now is——?" we somewhat diffidently enquire.

"Well,—the truth is, we have no fixed income at all, for we do not in the least rely upon subscribers. People send us what they please and when they please."

"And does that answer?"

"It has hitherto answered so well that though we spend fourpence or fivepence a day upon every child that is brought in, we have at this moment,—if you will promise to keep the secret,—a comfortable sum standing to our credit at the bank."

Here, then, is an institution, established without parade in the very heart of a working district, and maintained without any noisy appeals

to the charitable trumpet, where a mother may leave her child for the day with the certainty that for a less sum than she can pretend to keep it for at home, it will be properly housed and tended. Something, too, is gained by the discovery that complete success in a work of special tact and delicacy is attainable without a milk-and-water imitation of conventual regulations. If mere personal security during the day-hours from burns, and scalds, and contusions were all that is achieved, any one who has taken the trouble to enquire into infant casualties among the poor will set it down as no light social gain. But when cleanliness, order, decency, and, above all, tenderness, are the vital characteristics of the house, and when good feeding, kind nursing, and skilful doctoring are added, it is easy to see that babyland must exercise a healthy influence far beyond the limits of its remotest borders.

We have much satisfaction in putting before the public the above rose-coloured, but, we believe, true description of a baby-home, founded by sincere charity, and carried on with a devotion to good works which is in itself admirable; but we cannot do this without expressing our own opinion that there is much danger in such good works, and that the difficulty of doing good without concomitant evil is as serious in establishments for babies as in other institutions of charity.

All babies cannot be tended at a cost of fivepence a day,—fivepence or fourpence, that is, over and above the milk, clothing, and toys which are supplied from other benevolent sources,—of which sum the mother is called upon to pay either one penny only, or at the most twopence. And it seems probable that the worst mothers will obtain the assistance given rather than the best. Indeed, the instance cited goes to prove that such is the case. We do not want to press this view,—in doing which, were we to undertake the task, we should be led into arguments longer than the narrative of our contributor. But we cannot give that narrative to our readers without expressing our fears as to the result of these experiments in babyland.

THE NOVEMBER SHOOTING-STARS.

THE astronomers of France are preparing to observe the November shooting-stars from several stations on the shores of the Mediterranean, proposing to meet on the 16th, three days after the display, to compare notes, and if possible to obtain an answer to some of the interesting questions which are suggested by the phenomena observed during star-falls. Last year, and the year before, European astronomers did not invite attention to the November shooting-stars, their calculations leading rather to the conclusion that the display would only be visible in the western hemisphere. But this year, it is probable, that those who care to watch the heavens during the "wee small hours ayont the twal," will be well rewarded for their trouble.

During the last two years Adams and Leverrier, Schiaparelli, Peters, and Tempel, besides a host of other astronomers of name, have worked in the new field of scientific research opened by the discovery that shooting-stars are not mere atmospheric phenomena. We propose to discuss some of the wonderful discoveries which they have made respecting these strange visitants from the interplanetary spaces. We can promise the reader that we have no dull and tedious disquisition to bring before him, but a series of facts as surprising and as interesting as any which have ever rewarded the labours of our men of science.

Let us first consider the views which were generally entertained respecting the November meteors before the great display of November 13th, 1866. It is almost as interesting, in the light of what is now known, to read the comments which the most eminent men of science made on the subject of the meteors only three short years ago, as to read the famous "Chapter on Aer" in Burton's "Analysis of Melancholy,"—with its quaint references to the "Borbonian stars," and the planets of the Medici, and its oddly expressed doubts "whether the eccentricity of the earth be not approaching the sun."

It was supposed three years ago that the appearance of the November meteors is due to the existence of a zone or belt of bodies travelling around the sun in an orbit not differing greatly in dimensions from that of our own earth, and this fact was looked upon as one of the most striking in the whole range of astronomical science. The circumference of the meteor-belt was calculated at some six hundred millions of miles, and men marvelled at the thought of the

enormous volume of the zone, when one of its dimensions alone was so vast. We now know that the imagined meteor-zone is a minute and insignificant "quoit" of matter in comparison with the vast oval hoop along which the meteors really travel.

Then again it was held in 1866,—and justly held, because the view was the least startling explanation of observed facts,—that the recurrence of displays of unusual splendour three times in a century, was due to the existence of a rich group of meteors along one part of the zone; and that this group, losing,—or gaining, it was not known which,—one thirty-third part of a revolution in every year, was traversed by the earth only once in thirty-three years. We shall presently see that the true explanation of the peculiarity is far nobler, and more significant; and is associated, furthermore, with a feature in meteor-systems which as yet we can merely wonder at, without pretending to appreciate or understand.

Lastly, the velocity with which the meteors were supposed to travel, was very much less than that with which, in reality, they rush into our atmosphere after their vast journey through the interplanetary spaces.

We proceed to describe the processes by which these wonderful results have been rendered as trustworthy as the theory of gravitation itself, on whose evidence they depend. The story is as instructive as it is interesting. It will show us that astronomers are not merely careful in the formation of hypotheses, but that they are ever ready to suggest doubts about the justice of their own conclusions, and freely to abandon theories over which they have themselves laboured.

Before the great display of 1866, directions were sent to all the astronomers who were interested in the November meteors,—and what astronomer was not?—to pay particular attention to certain points, which were held to bear importantly on the subject of the meteor-system. Astronomers knew beforehand that all the meteors which swept across our skies would seem to radiate from a point in the constellation Leo; but the exact point was not known. A well marked group of stars, resembling a sickle, and forming part of the lion's head and shoulders, was the particular region of the heavens towards which astronomers directed their attention; and when the shower actually came, the "radiant point" whence the meteors all seemed to direct their paths, was found to lie almost exactly midway between the handle and the point of this imaginary celestial sickle.

It can easily be shown that the determination of this radiant point was of the utmost importance, though, as we shall see presently, the most valuable information respecting the meteors was derived from an unexpected quarter, and was wholly independent of the observations which were made in November, 1866. Why the "radiant" is important may thus be explained. The November meteors as they enter our atmosphere are all travelling side by side in parallel paths;

and we, placed as it were in the middle of a shower of meteors, but seeing only a short portion of the path of each, recognise in their motions an apparent radiation from a point, just as the artist sees all parallel lines in a building he is drawing, tend to a "vanishing point;" and, of course, if the astronomer can tell what is the vanishing point for a meteor-system, he can tell what is the common direction in which all these bodies are piercing our atmosphere.

So far all is clear; but here a difficulty comes in. The earth is not at rest, and so the direction in which the meteors seem to approach us is not the true direction in which they are travelling. To take a simple illustration of our meaning. We know that if we are travelling rapidly through a rain-storm the rain seems to drift in our face even though it be really falling straight down. Whatever the direction of the storm, in fact, it always seems brought in front of us when we move rapidly through it. But this, which occurs in the case of a heavy down-pour of rain, is much more obvious in the case of a snow-storm, because the snow falls more slowly, and therefore our motion is relatively more effective in changing the apparent direction of the shower. And if we conceive a shower falling yet more slowly, or all but stationary, we see at once that its apparent direction will be almost wholly due to our motion, if we are moving pretty rapidly.

The upshot of this is that we cannot judge of the true direction of a shower through which we are moving, unless we know the rate at which the shower is really falling.

But astronomers were quite uncertain about the velocity of the November meteors. Supposing it was the case, as some astronomers thought, that the meteors took a year and a thirty-third of a year in travelling round the sun, then the velocity of the meteors was slightly greater than that of our earth. If, on the other hand, the meteors' period is a year less one thirty-third, their velocity was slightly less than that of the earth. But there were two or three other suppositions available, each giving a different velocity to the meteors; and astronomers did not see their way to determining which of all the suggested periods was the most probable one.

Here, then, science seemed at a stand-still. It was hopeless to attempt to solve the problem by direct observations, because, although some of the November meteors are sufficiently brilliant to be readily distinguished from their fellows, so that two astronomers at different places might readily make quite sure that they had simultaneously observed a particular body; yet the meteors flash far too swiftly across our skies for any one to "time" them very accurately. And nothing but the most accurate timing would avail towards the determination of a meteor's velocity.

In this difficulty a mathematician came to the rescue whose special delight it has always been to attack problems which seem insoluble.

Professor Adams, the first astronomer who pointed out the region of the heavens where unseen Neptune was pursuing his slow career, the astronomer who, later on, had mastered a problem which had defeated the wonderful powers of Laplace, came now to attack as interesting and as perplexing a matter as had ever engaged the attention of astronomers.

He argued thus. Grant that these bodies travel in such and such a period, and that mathematics enable us to know all that will happen to them in their career, we can calculate how near they will come to this or that planet, and how much they will be dragged from their path under its influence; and so we can tell how, in the course of years, the path will shift in space. The problem may not be particularly easy, and we may have to waste a good deal of labour in testing wrong suppositions; but the course must in the end lead us to the knowledge we seek. For we have only to compare the old dates of the shower with those which the display now affects, to tell how much the meteor-zone really has shifted in space; and we must go on trying one orbit after another until we find one which accounts for the movement actually observed.

Going back to the year 902 we find that the remarkable shower which Condé mentions as having taken place in that year occurred on October 13th. Coming down to later times we find that in 1798 a shower was seen on the morning of November 9th; in 1833 the display took place on the morning of the 13th; in 1866,—as most of us remember,—the shower was seen on the morning of November 14th. Here, then, was a change of date, which indicated a change in the place of the meteoric orbit; and this was all that Professor Adams required. A part,—in fact the greater part of the change,—had to be left out of consideration, as due to a peculiarity in the earth's own motion. But quite enough remained for his purpose.

With enormous labour,—the problem being one of the most difficult which a mathematician could propose to himself,—Adams calculated, one after another, the disturbing effects to which the meteor-system could be subject on all the hypotheses which gave the system a comparatively small orbit. But in all cases the result failed to indicate even an approach to accordance with the observed shifting of the meteor-system.

Now there was one hypothesis,—the simplest of all in one sense, but in another the most startling that could be imagined,—which Adams had not as yet dealt with. It is to be remembered that the foundation of all the hypotheses put forward as to the period of the meteor-system, was the recurrence, once in about thirty-three years, of showers of unusual density and splendour. And every hypothesis yet dealt with by Adams had been so arranged as to account for the peculiarity without giving the meteors a period much exceeding a year.

But what if the peculiarity was to be explained by the simple supposition that the meteors revolve around the sun only once in thirty years? Perhaps the reader may be disposed to ask why this simple explanation was not the first to suggest itself to astronomers. The reason is easily explained. If a body travels in a known period around the sun, the extent of the body's path is also known. We cannot tell the shape of the path, but we can tell the exact length of its longer diameter. Now the length corresponding to a period of thirty-three years is enormously greater than the diameter of our earth's orbit. It is greater than the diameter of Mars's orbit, than that of Jupiter's, nay, even than that of Saturn's, though Saturn is nine times farther from the sun than we are and was recognised by ancient astronomers as the most distant of all the known planets. In fact the mean distance of a body travelling round the sun in thirty-three years would be more than ten times that of our earth.

Even this, however, was not all. The planets travel in almost circular paths around the central sun. But, as astronomers justly urged, that if the November meteors were supposed to have such a period as thirty-three years, they must follow a path of an extremely eccentric figure. We know that they come at least as near to the sun as our earth. Now their mean distance being ten times as great as the earth's, and their least not greater than the earth's, their greatest must be at least nineteen times as great as our own earth's distance from the sun! This enormous range must carry them beyond the orbit of distant Uranus; and it was very justly argued that such a supposition as this was utterly incredible.

Adams, however, had no choice but to try this incredible hypothesis. He had more difficulty in dealing with the new orbit than with the others, because of its great eccentricity. But there had for a long time been lying idle, and it was thought useless, a mathematical tool of immense power, specially devised by the astronomer Gauss, for just such a problem as Adams now had to deal with; and of this instrument, which few but he could have wielded, Adams availed himself. In travelling along the new orbit the meteors would be exposed to the disturbing influence of Jupiter, and Saturn, and Uranus,—the giants of the solar system,—and Adams presently found that disturbing effects much larger than he had before obtained were making their appearance. At length, when the work was concluded, he found that there was the most satisfactory agreement between the result and the observed movement of the meteor-zone. No doubt remained that the vast oval orbit, which had been so long rejected by astronomers on account of its wonderful dimensions, and especially on account of the enormous disproportion between its range and the minuteness of the meteors, is the true path along which these tiny cosmical bodies travel.

Strange as this result is, it is rendered yet stranger, we may

notice in passing, by the circumstances attending its discovery. We see here the singular combination of a rejected hypothesis, an almost forgotten method of calculation, and an old-world story of celestial prodigies,—recorded rather through superstition than with any serious purpose,—availing to the solution of a problem which the most careful processes of observation must have failed to touch.

But now we have to describe a series of singular coincidences which give a strange interest to the story of the meteors.

Other astronomers besides Adams had been dealing with the 93-year period, though for different reasons than his, and in a different manner. A strange circumstance had come to light about the August shooting-stars,—the famous “tears of St. Lawrence,”—which had set astronomers thinking. An Italian astronomer, Schiaparelli, had been led to notice the fact that a large and brilliant comet, which had appeared in 1862, crossed the path of the earth in the very region in which we encounter the August meteor-system; and he was led to inquire whether the direction of its motion showed any agreement with that of the August meteors. There was the same difficulty here, of course, that Adams had had to encounter with the November meteors; and Schiaparelli, though a skilful mathematician, was not equal to the task of mastering the problem. Instead of attempting to do so, he contented himself by trying to find out whether, by assigning simply a very eccentric orbit to the August meteors, there would appear any such coincidence as he was in search of. The result was the discovery of an all but exact coincidence,—in other words, the bright comet of 1862 had not only crossed the earth's path where the meteors do, but had travelled in the same direction as they do, and at the same speed,—if only Schiaparelli's opening assumption were correct.

Doubtless this was a result which would have contented any one but an astronomer. Consider for a moment what it signified. There was a single assumption, which amounted to the supposition that the meteors travel at the same rate as the comet where they cross the earth's orbit. But they might do this in a myriad different ways, since no assumption was made about the direction of their flight. They might have come from east or west, or north or south, from above or from below the earth's path, and with any degree of inclination; but they were found to come in that precise direction in which the comet travelled! What could be clearer than the fact that they are associated in some strange way with the comet, and travel ever in the same path with it!

But astronomers were not satisfied. The term “assumption” is one to which they have a strong objection. Newton of old laid down for himself the law, “*hypotheses non fingo*,” and astronomy has made that law the rule of her whole system of inquiry. An hypo-

thesis must be confirmed by very strong evidence indeed before astronomers will have anything to say to it.

So Leverrier and others turned to the November meteors to see if the members of that system had any evidence to give in favour of Schiaparelli's strange hypothesis. They argued that if Schiaparelli were right, it would be reasonable enough to suppose that thirty-three years might be the true period of the November meteors, since comets are known to delight in eccentric paths. So Leverrier calculated the path of the November meteors on the supposition that they travel around the sun in a period of about thirty-three years. The work was not difficult; in fact, to the practical astronomer nothing could be more simple. There was all the difference imaginable between the work of calculating the path corresponding to such a period and the work of demonstrating, as Adams had done, that that period, and no other, is the one in which the meteors complete their journey round the sun.

When the orbit was calculated, however, something more remained to be done. Schiaparelli had a comet to compare with the August meteors, and had calculated their path for the purpose of that comparison. Astronomers had now calculated the path of the November meteors, and had to look about them for a comet in whose track they might find some resemblance to the path of the meteors.

All the brilliant comets which have made their appearance in recent times were questioned in vain. There was not one of them with which the November meteors could claim the most distant relationship. Besides, if there really were a bright comet, having a 33-year period, we ought to have seen it many times during the 900 years which have elapsed since the first recorded display of the November meteors; and if this had happened, astronomers would long since have determined the periodic nature of the comet's motions.

Failing brilliant comets, faint ones began to be thought of; but for a long time no success attended the search. At length, just as it was about to be abandoned, the attention of Dr. Peters, an eminent German astronomer, was called to a minute telescopic comet which had been discovered early in the year 1866. Many months pass in general before astronomers satisfy themselves as to the path and period of a comet, and so it had been in this case; insomuch that when the search for a comet-companion to the November meteors was first commenced, the correct path and period of the comet we are referring to had not been made public. When Dr. Peters compared the comet's path with that which Leverrier had assigned to the meteors, he found that the agreement was absolutely perfect. No further doubt can remain that Schiaparelli's hypothesis is correct. Some sort of association undoubtedly exists between comets and meteors, though what the nature of the associa-

ciation may be it would perplex our best astronomers and physicists to determine at present.

It is well worth while to notice what a strange series of coincidences is exhibited in the whole history of this matter. Had people in the year 902 not been frightened nearly out of their wits by a great shower of meteors, and so been led to attach historical importance to the event and hand down day and date to us, Adams would have wanted the evidence which enabled him to determine demonstratively the true period of the November meteors. In this case, the coincidence observed by Dr. Peters would have been no more demonstrative than the one Schiaparelli had detected. We may add also that the same defect in the evidence would probably have appeared had Gauss not devoted many laborious hours in long past years to elaborate what seemed a practically-useless mode of calculation. For Adams might justly have felt deterred from the double labour of making and of using the complex mathematical instrument which he actually employed to master nature's secret.

Then, again, consider how opportunely the two comets appeared upon the scene, and how admirably their respective features were adapted to the requirements of the case! Had the bright comet of 1862 appeared much earlier, Schiaparelli's hypothesis would have been formed only to be forgotten. Had it appeared much later, the notion of an association between comets and meteors would not have been put forward early enough to lead the observers of the November display of 1866 to test the view by a reference to the November meteors. Again, if the comet of 1862 had been as faint as the one of 1866, Schiaparelli would never have thought of associating it with so remarkable a meteoric system as the "tears of St. Lawrence." The comparative insignificance of the comet of 1866 was a matter of little moment, because astronomers had had their attention already directed to the search for a comet to correspond with the November meteors. Nor did its late appearance create any difficulty; it served, on the contrary, to bring the comet into more notice than it would otherwise have received. Yet how readily the comet of 1866 might have been missed altogether by astronomers! It was missed in 1833, in 1799, and in 1766, though telescopists were on the watch for comets during all those years. If it had been missed in 1866 it could not have been detected before 1899, and by that time Schiaparelli's hypothesis would probably have been altogether forgotten.

It is strange, too, to notice that while a series of events had thus happened at the precise time when they were calculated to be of most value, there had been in 1866 a sudden awakening of the minds of astronomers and physicists to the importance of meteoric phenomena. In America, as well as in Europe, the attention of astronomers was attracted, in a manner never before noticed, to the

approach of the November shower. It would be difficult indeed to point to any astronomical event during the last century which has been looked forward to with intenser interest, or has engaged the attention of so many first-class men of science.

To return, however, to the history of the series of discoveries which followed the labours of astronomers upon the subject of the November meteors.

It had now been shown that the zone of cosmical bodies forming the November meteor-system has an orbit extending far out into space, even beyond the path of the distant planet Uranus. Astronomers began to inquire whether the Herschel planet had had anything to do with the introduction of this family of meteors into the neighbourhood of our earth.

At first sight the question seems a strange one indeed. Is it not conceivable, one might be disposed to urge, that the meteor-system has been in its present position quite as long as Uranus has been travelling around the sun? Had the meteors not been associated with a comet it is probable that this view would have been held. But astronomers have been led by experience to look on the large planets as the principal agents in causing comets to approach our neighbourhood. Jupiter, for instance, has quite a large family of comets which have been forced by his energetic attraction to travel on a path having its outer range close to Jupiter's path. And, singularly enough, when once a comet has thus been forced into subjection by a planet, it can never escape unless its new path bring it near to another planet large enough to force on the comet a change of masters. Jupiter is the great comet-disturber; but Saturn has no insignificant family of dependent comets; and Uranus undoubtedly has the November meteor-comet under subjection. For astronomers have traced back the path of the comet, and they find that more than sixteen hundred years ago the comet was quite close to the giant mass of Uranus. Whence the comet was travelling, and whither it would have gone if undisturbed, we cannot say; but having come so close to Uranus, the enormous attractive powers of that planet bent the comet's path sharply round, and then left the comet free to rush off almost straight towards the sun. But the comet must always go back once in about thirty-three years to the scene of its encounter with and subjection by the planet, and whenever the return happens to coincide with the appearance of Uranus in that neighbourhood, the comet will have a new path forced upon it. With this, however, we are not concerned. What is really interesting, in relation to the November meteors, is the fact that they follow the comet's track close past the orbit of distant Uranus, and that we owe to the attraction of this invisible planet the yearly recurrence of those star-showers which not so long ago were thought to be insignificant atmospheric phenomena. Strange is it to think that the stars which flash across

our skies, and in a few brief moments are dissipated into finest vapour, have swept across the whole breadth of that vast abyss which separates us from the distant path of Uranus. For seventeen years they pursue their silent course from out that far-off region, rushing onwards with a speed many times swifter than that of the rifle-bullet. They turn sharply round the sun as they pass their perihelion, and then their course brings them full tilt towards the earth as she is traversing the autumn quadrant of her orbit. One would imagine that a flight of missiles directed with such enormous velocity upon the seemingly defenceless earth would destroy every living thing upon its surface. But not so. Guarded by her shield,—

“The firmament, expanse of liquid, pure,
Transparent elemental air, diffused
In circuit to the uttermost convex
Of this great round, partition firm and sure,”

the earth passes safely through the storm. In a few moments the meteors which have been speeding so many years through space, close their career, consumed by their own enormous velocity as they rush through the upper regions of our atmosphere.

Let us briefly recapitulate the facts which have been revealed respecting the November meteors.

We have seen that they have a period of thirty-three years; that they travel in a long eccentric orbit, extending far out in space beyond the path of Uranus; that they are associated with a telescopic comet detected in 1866; and, lastly, that this comet was introduced into the neighbourhood of the sun nearly a thousand years ago by the attraction of the planet Uranus.

These discoveries are sufficiently surprising; but others, in part dependent on these, have still to be recorded.

Now that we know the true figure of the meteoric orbit, we can tell the actual velocity with which the meteors encounter the earth. This velocity is much greater than had been supposed before the enormous dimensions of the meteor-system had been suspected. A body travelling from a distance nineteen times as great as our earth's, acquires, before reaching the earth's neighbourhood, a far greater velocity than that with which we are ourselves carried round the sun. When they encounter us the meteors are travelling with the inconceivable velocity of about twenty-five miles per second. But we have said that they encounter the earth nearly full tilt, and the earth's velocity adds importantly to the swiftness with which they actually penetrate the upper regions of our atmosphere. Their actual rate, looking on them as projectiles hurled against the earth's air-shield, is no less than forty miles per second. A cannon-ball flies at the rate of about the third part of a mile per second; and it may safely be assumed that the velocity of the meteors exceeds, more than one

hundred times, the highest rate of speed which men will ever be able to give to any projectile they can devise.

But we can gather yet more from our knowledge of the path traversed by the meteors. We can tell how deep the meteor-stream is at any part which the earth may cross. To do this we must dismiss all consideration of the velocity with which the meteors travel, just as we should dismiss all thought of a river's velocity if we were gauging its depth. All we want to know is the position of the stream, and the time which the earth takes in passing through it.

Judged in this way, it appears that the part of the stream through which the earth passed in 1866 was no less than 80,000 miles deep. In 1867 the earth traversed a shallower part of the stream, the duration of the passage indicating a depth of only about 50,000 miles. Last year, however, the stream was much deeper; the display was seen on two nights in succession in America, and was also well seen in England, and even at the Cape of Good Hope,—though usually places on the southern hemisphere are not good stations for observing the shower. The meteor-stream can scarcely have been less than 500,000 miles deep.

The increase of depth thus indicated had been in part anticipated; and this year it is likely that the earth will pass through a yet deeper portion of the stream. Thus we can hardly fail to have a display, for the earth will be probably a full day in passing through the meteor-system. It was known in 1866 that the earth would pass through a small but densely compacted part of the meteor-zone; and so a very fine display, lasting a comparatively short time, was expected. But the chance that the display would be seen in any particular locality was comparatively small. This year, on the other hand, matters are reversed. If the weather is only fine we may look with confidence for a display of shooting-stars on the morning of November 14th; and though it is not likely that the display will resemble that which was seen in 1866, yet it will doubtless be well worth watching,—especially as there will be no moon,—as in 1867 and 1868,—to dim the brightest meteors and to blot out the fainter ones altogether.

THE CHEVALIER'S CONVERSION.

ONE morning in the month of Septemer, 1750, a well-favoured gentleman, apparently about thirty years of age, tall and well made, though with a slightly stooping mien, passed along the Strand westward from Essex Street; possibly, on his way, glancing back now and then uneasily over his shoulder at certain dreadful objects raised high on iron rods above Temple Bar,—the skulls of victims of the '45. He was handsomely yet simply dressed, was sunburnt, being originally of a light complexion, and had the air of one who was a stranger to the town. It was noticeable that when he spoke his accent was decidedly foreign. He entered a London parish church, and stating his name to be "Charles Stuart," renounced the Roman Catholic faith, and avowed himself a convert to the religion of England as by law established. He walked through St. James's, and took a turn in the Mall and in Hyde Park. In the course of his promenade he was met by one who recognised him and made an attempt to kneel to him. A perilous proceeding assuredly; for the gentleman to whom it was thus purposed to pay homage was no less a person than Prince Charles Edward, the young Pretender, or "the Chevalier," as it was esteemed polite for even strict Whigs of the period to designate him. And the Chevalier in London in 1750 had indeed his head in the lion's mouth; while the condign punishment of traitors awaited all who aided, befriended him, or acknowledged his supremacy.

This is the story of the Chevalier's visit to London and profession of Protestantism, as told by Hume and others upon evidence of a more or less trustworthy character. There are discrepancies in the narratives as to dates and minor details; but the main facts stated are not in conflict with each other. The secret journeys of Charles Edward to London have been often discussed and questioned; but it seems to be now generally agreed that he was certainly present in 1750, and possibly again in 1753; an earlier appearance in 1748, and a later in 1761, at the coronation of George III., being much less clearly ascertained. That his conversion or his open recantation took place, if at all, in the year 1750, can be supported on the whole by a very respectable measure of testimony, and perhaps to a greater extent than has been commonly credited.

Charles Edward was not, like his grandfather, a man "to lose three kingdoms for one mass." To gain the three kingdoms the Chevalier would readily have lost any number of masses. It is probable that

he discovered in '45 how great an obstacle to his success was comprised in his religion. Of course, professedly, on that occasion he claimed the throne for his father,—a very unlikely person to change or modify his faith. Still, naturally, he kept in view his own succession to the crown. It became clear to him that a Roman Catholic sovereign could not be again in England. His own religious convictions were of a light and elastic kind. Long afterwards, in 1769, when his faithful adherents were still plotting zealously on his behalf,—for when, indeed, did they cease to plot?—he empowered them to announce, with a view to winning Protestant recruits to his cause, that “any demonstrations he might make in favour of the Roman Catholic faith were owing to the difficulty of his situation, as, when even between eleven and twelve, he had made up his mind against the truth of its doctrines, and determined on the change that had subsequently taken place in his professions.” This was, no doubt, to say the least of it, a desperate exaggeration. Still it would seem that he had been at no time a strict Catholic. Just before his descent in '45, he wrote to his father: “I should think it proper, if your Majesty pleases, to be put at his Holiness's feet, asking his blessing on this occasion; but what I chiefly ask is your own, which, I hope, will procure me that of Almighty God upon my endeavours to serve you, my family, and my country.” Lord Stanhope suggests that the sternest Romanist would forgive the Chevalier this preference for the paternal over the pontifical blessing. Yet it is certain that no strict Romanist would have avowed such a preference. Dr. King,* describing his interview with the Prince in 1750, states: “as to his religion, he is certainly free from all bigotry and superstition, and would readily conform to the religion of the country. With the Catholics he is a Catholic; with the Protestants he is a Protestant; and to convince the latter of his sincerity, he often carried an English Common Prayer Book in his pocket; and sent to Gordon a nonjuring clergyman to christen the first child he had by Mrs. Walkenshaw.” Dr. King does not seem to have been aware that the Prince had made any formal profession of Protestantism. Hume, upon the authority of Lord Marischal and Helvetius, stated that “Charles Edward was no bigot: but rather had learnt from the philosophers at Paris to affect a contempt of all religion.”

“His governor was a Protestant,” writes Dr. King, “and I am apt to believe purposely neglected his education, of which it is surmised he made a merit to the English Ministry, for he was always supposed to be their pensioner.” If it is meant by this that the governor failed to bring up his pupil rigorously as a Romanist, it is certain that a worse way of serving the English Ministry could hardly have

* “Political and Literary Anecdotes of his own Time.” By Dr. William King, Principal of St. Mary Hall, Oxon. London: 1818.

been devised. The security of Protestant King George greatly consisted in the Romanism of the Chevalier. But, as Lord Stanhope shows, the prince's education was entrusted to Sir Thomas Sheridan, an Irish Roman Catholic, against whose good faith there appears nothing to urge, though his want of capacity to discharge the duties entrusted to him was manifest enough. Possessed of fair natural abilities, Charles Edward was throughout his life woefully ignorant; he could speak French and Italian, but he was uninstructed in the very rudiments of knowledge. Sir Thomas Sheridan landed with his pupil in Scotland in 1745, and probably then evinced greater gallantry as a soldier than he had previously exhibited ability as a preceptor. He died at Rome in 1746, and was sincerely lamented by his pupil.

If, then, it is conceded that the Chevalier's attachment to the faith of his father and grandfather was but of a lukewarm and imperfect kind; that his religious principles, such as they were, were not very pronounced, or were held in solution, so to speak, to be precipitated, at some convenient moment, even in the direction of Protestantism, should that seem expedient; there were many reasons why the year 1750 should be selected as the period for his delivering a formal and authoritative decision on the subject. Since July, 1747, when his brother Henry had been nominated a cardinal,—a proceeding most ruinous to the Stuart cause, and concealed to the last moment in order that all remonstrances on the subject might be avoided or rendered futile,—the Chevalier had been almost wholly estranged from his family. They had disregarded his wishes in a marked manner. On his side he was now prepared to slight theirs, even in relation to a matter they held so vital as his religious opinions. In April, 1748, he had despatched Sir James Graham to Berlin, with instructions "to propose a marriage [with a member of the Prussian Royal Family] and to declare that I never intend to marry but a Protestant; and if the King refuses an alliance to ask advice whom to take, as he is known to be the wisest prince in Europe." The scheme promised success for a while, but ended in failure. He had then to turn his attention in another direction. In the autumn of 1750 King George was in Hanover. A Jacobite plot was on foot; its object being, probably, the raising of the Chevalier to the throne, not as Prince-Regent merely,—the character he had professed in '45,—but as King. He had secretly journeyed to London, and taken refuge in the house, in Essex Street, of the Viscountess Primrose, formerly Miss Drelincourt, daughter of the Dean of Armagh, and a staunch Jacobite. It may have been to conciliate the English Jacobites, or, possibly, in fulfilment of some condition they had enacted from him as the price of their support,—for the '45 and its results had made men timorous,—that the Chevalier then publicly avowed himself a convert to the Church of England as by law established, and, in

such wise, became qualified for succession to the crown, so far as related to the provision implied in the Act of Settlement, that all future British monarchs should be Protestants.

The Right Honourable Charles Williams Wynn supplied a note to his sister's diary,—published in 1864, as “*The Diary of a Lady of Quality*,”—to the effect that his grandmother had often repeated to him the account she had received from Lady Primrose of the Chevalier's visit in 1750. “The impression he left on the mind of Lady Primrose, a warm and attached partisan, was by no means favourable.” Further, Mr. Wynn adds: “I have read myself among the Stuart Papers a minute of the heads of a manifesto in Charles Edward's own handwriting, among which appeared:—‘My having in the year 1750 conformed to the Church of England in St. James's Church.’”

The Stuart Papers, as they are called, are now in the Royal Library; and Lord Stanhope, when Lord Mahon, by permission of William IV., had access to them while engaged upon his *History of England*. Some few years since, Mr. Woodward, the royal librarian, published some extracts from these documents relating to the Chevalier's visit to London in 1750, and his conversion to Protestantism. Upon a copy of a “manifesto,” addressed by the prince to Scotland, were found remarks in his own scrambling handwriting. One of these was as follows:—“8thly. . . . To mention my religion,—which is,—of the Church of England, as by law established, as I have declared myself when in London, in 1750.”

It may be this was the paper referred to by Mr. Wynn, although it is to be noted that no mention is made in it of St. James's Church; nor, indeed, does it imply necessarily that the Chevalier's declaration of Protestantism was made in a church at all. The authorities which are agreed as to the fact of a public conversion are by no means of one opinion in regard to the particular church in which the renunciation of Romanism actually occurred. As we have seen, Mr. Wynn refers to St. James's Church. Hume, who assigns the visit to London to the year 1753, relates, on the authority of Jacobites likely to be well informed, that the Chevalier then “took the opportunity of formally renouncing the Roman Catholic religion, under his own name of Charles Stuart, in the New Church in the Strand.” Horace Walpole, writing to Sir Horace Mann in August, 1765, says:—“We believe, past all doubt, that the Pretender's eldest son is turned Protestant,—in earnest so; and, in truth, I think he could have no other reason now. What is more wonderful, and yet believed, is, that he came over and abjured in St. Martin's Church, in London. Though he risked so much, what clergyman could suspect it was he? I asked if Johnson,* Bishop of Worcester, gave him absolution? He declares that he will never marry, and his reason does him honour,—

* Johnson was well known to have been a Jacobite.

that he may not leave England embroiled. What a strange conclusion of the House of Stuart to end in a Protestant and a cardinal ! . . . I pity the old phantom, if they have told him of his son's apostacy." The "old phantom," as Walpole was fond of designating the elder Pretender, did not long survive. "The 1st of January, 1766," wrote the Rev. Mr. Forbes, the titular Bishop of Orkney, "about a quarter after 9 o'clock, put a period to the troubles and disappointments of good old Mr. James Misfortunate."

It may be noted that, supposing the Chevalier to have walked, as he is said to have done, from Lady Primrose's house in Essex Street to Hyde Park, all the three churches named,—St. James's, the New Church in the Strand, and St. Martin's,—would have been passed by him on his way. But which church he entered,—if he entered any,—must remain a matter of doubt.

In 1772 we find Walpole again addressing Sir Horace Mann on the subject of the Chevalier's conversion, apparently with some forgetfulness of what he had already stated on the subject. "I have heard," he writes, "from one who should know,—General Redmond, an Irish officer in the French service,—that the Pretender himself abjured the Roman Catholic religion at Liege, a few years ago; and that on that account the Irish Catholics no longer make him remittances. This would be some, and the only apology but fear for the Pope's refusing him the title of king. What say you to this Protestantism?"

The plot of 1750 having proved abortive, the Chevalier disappeared for some time. "Where he travelled or where he stayed," writes Mr. Chambers in his excellent "*History of the Rebellion*," "what name and character he assumed, and by whom he was attended, were unknown to his friends in Britain, and even to those abroad, who might have been expected to be most in his confidence." In April, 1752, he was seen for a few days at Campvere, in the Island of Middleburg, and he appears to have trafficked a little with the Swedish Court, seeking aid in a new enterprise. Evidence has been found of his residence for a time at Stockholm; the insignia he wore in some high masonic character are said to be preserved even now in one of the lodges established in that city. He was still professing himself a Protestant. In a letter dated 12th November, 1753, signed with his incognito name, "John Douglas," but without mention of the place from whence it was written, he informs Colonel Goring that he had sent instructions to Avignon for the dismissal of all his Papist servants, and of his mistress, who was also a Papist, and had behaved insolently; but that he still retained two gentlemen and all the Protestant servants. Another letter adds the reason for paying off his servants, "I am not able to maintain them any more;" and further expresses a hope that if they go to Rome his father will provide for them. In September of the same year, it may be mentioned, the Duke of Newcastle wrote to Lord Chancellor Hard-

wick, "The King of Prussia is now avowedly the principal, if not the sole support of the Pretender and the Jacobite cause."

His hope of gaining the English crown was ever present with him. It was the business of his life to plot and plan with this object, as it was his fate to see all his cherished designs one after another crumble to pieces in his hands. And oftentimes he was greatly depressed; hope deferred, made his heart very sick. Moreover he became much troubled by his creditors, and desperately in want of money. His habits and mode of life were now very intemperate and irregular, insomuch that the Jacobite party in Britain, alarmed for his health, sent him a memorial, pointing out how injuriously the evil reports in circulation concerning him were calculated to affect his prospects, and entreating him to live with greater circumspection and decency. He replied so arrogantly as to offend many of his best friends. Again he disappeared for some time, and is supposed to have been living in great privacy at Avignon.

In 1762 there seems to have been another plot on foot, and the Chevalier dictates a letter, preserved by Bishop Forbes, "Assure my friends in Britain that I am in perfect health; that I hope it may come like a thunderbolt; and that I shall not neglect to recompense every worthy subject as soon as it shall be in my power. They may be assured that I shall live and die in the religion of the Church of England, which I have embraced; and that no kind thing can be said but what I wish to all my dear friends, for whose good I wish to be more amongst them, than for any advantage it would be to myself, as I have no great ambition except for their welfare." In 1763, the English Jacobites are expressing a desire that the prince should marry, and piously trusting that the event may be brought about, and may be productive of many future pretenders to the throne. Meanwhile the Scottish Jacobites are holding sacred and employing as drinking-cups on solemn occasions the Highland shoes worn by the Chevalier when, disguised as a woman, he travelled through Skye. The devotion of his party was indeed stubborn, and, in its way, of sterling material.

About a year before the old Pretender's death, Charles Edward renewed correspondence with his brother, from whom he had been so long estranged. The Cardinal treated him with much tender courtesy and generosity. Charles was on his way to Rome when he was met on the road, two posts beyond Florence, by Mr. Lumisden (who had succeeded Mr. Edgar as private secretary to the old Pretender), bringing news of James's death. Arrived in Rome he was received as king by his brother and the immediate attendants of his deceased father. Yet his royal pretensions were acknowledged by no European Court. To his bitter mortification even the Pope,—for the cause of whose Church his grandfather had lost his crown,—sent word that the Chevalier could not be allowed to assume any titles in Rome. Was

this, as Walpole suggests, because of his conversion? His reply was spirited enough. "He told the Nuncio that the loss of Culloden gave him more real concern than any loss he could suffer by any orders from his Holiness, and that whatever titles he would take neither Pope nor Conclave could, nor had any right to take from him." The speech has its Protestant flavour. He was now left very much alone, however, for few ventured to set at naught the Pope's orders. Even the heads of the English, Scotch, and Irish colleges were sent from Rome in disgrace for having presumed to receive the Chevalier as king within their own walls. To these difficulties in the way of maintaining his kingly character were added embarrassments of a pecuniary kind. Poverty and royalty, or pseudo-royalty, are indeed most incompatible companions. The pensions paid by the Courts of France and Spain to James were not continued to Charles. His whole income was no more than 15,000 crowns per annum, including an allowance of 10,000 received from the Pope by the Cardinal, and generously handed over by him to his brother. He withdrew to his father's seat at Albano, and assumed the modest title of Count of Albany; in no way, however, abandoning his hopes of one day ruling in England.

The Chevalier's visit to Rome was jealously and suspiciously regarded by the Protestant Jacobites; indeed, at all times the religious differences of his adherents must have greatly perplexed him. He could never be Protestant enough for the Protestants, nor Romanist enough for the Romanists. Both exclaimed against his profligate life and the habits of intemperance that seemed daily to be gaining upon him. The Protestants complained that the Cardinal and the priests had obtained a most dangerous ascendancy over him. The strict Romanists reproached him for falling away from the religious example of his grandfather, whose canonization they were soliciting from the Court of Rome. Mr. Woodward discovered among the Stuart Papers a letter without date or signature, yet evidently written by a Protestant Jacobite, probably a Scot, about the year 1769. The writer expresses serious concern regarding the Chevalier's visit to Rome. "I heard more than three years ago that the Prince, upon the King's death, was resolved to go to Rome, of which I took no notice having [known] long before that he said he would never return to Rome. It is most earnestly wished that he would be so good as change his intention of going there, if he ever had it. It may happen that his affairs in Britain [arrive] at the crisis in his favour at the time he was there, which could not fail to make a very bad turn even with his friends upon hearing it. But how would his enemies triumph and be overjoyed! Yea, his best wishers might justly believe that he was not settled in his principles of religion, which, being the same with their own, gave them the best grounds to believe that they would get him safely settled on the throne of his fathers, as there was no

other possible objection to him. But upon his being there they might suspect that he was resolved at the bottom to continue in his father's principles of religion. Besides, if he should go there and retain his present opinion, he might be exposed to great hazards amidst a people so bigoted to a differing way of thinking; and it is not to be doubted but they would contrive something against him, at least to disappoint him of the designs he had for going; and whatever view he had it is not to be compared with the gaining of the crown of Scotland,* England, and Ireland. But not to pry into what the design of his journey may be, he is sure to obtain it more easily when he is in possession of these crowns." It is clear that the writer of this letter had convinced himself of the fact of the Chevalier's conversion, although he could not resist suspicions as to the possibility of the Prince's backsliding in the future.

Among the manuscripts,†—many of them mere scraps of paper and card hurriedly written on,—Mr. Woodward also found the following lines in the Chevalier's hand, which although they certainly do not suggest his possession of poetic gifts, have some bearing on his conversion :—

"Papist, Irish, such is fools,
Such as them can't be my tools.
I hate all priests and the regions they run in,
From the Pope of Rome to the Papists of Britain."

The lines are without date, but there can be little doubt that they were written after the Pope's refusal to recognise the Chevalier as King of England.

M. Louis Dutens, who published, in 1806, five volumes of "*Memoirs of a Traveller now in Retirement*," makes curious mention of the Chevalier on one or two occasions. M. Dutens appears to have been intimate with Horace Walpole, who describes him as "a French Protestant clergyman, who had been employed in the embassy at Turin under Mr. Mackenzie and Lord Mountstuart, and author of several works. M. Dutens found the Chevalier not so destitute of understanding as he was said to be. "I have seen him," he continues, "several times, and once had a conversation of two hours with him. He spoke several languages, and seemed to be well acquainted with the political interests of the Courts of Europe. That which he praised least was the Court of France, of which he complained on many accounts. Besides the manner in which they had acted towards him in the expedition of 1745, he said it was at the persuasion of France that he married a princess of Stolberg; and that the Duke d'Aiguillon, who was then Minister of Foreign Affairs, had

* Surely this method of enumerating the three kingdoms sufficiently reveals the nationality of the writer.

† Mr. Woodward describes the letters, documents, &c., as "many thousands in number."

promised him, upon consideration of the marriage, a pension of 250,000 livres which was never paid him." Further, M. Dutens, advances a somewhat extraordinary statement:—"The Abbé Fabroni, Rector of the University of Pisa, assured me that at the commencement of the American war he had seen letters from the Bostonians to the Pretender inviting him to come and put himself at their head. I knew that the Duke de Choiseul had a design to send that prince to America in the year 1760; but I cannot help doubting whether such determined republicans as the Bostonians would have wished to have a prince of the House of Stuart for their chief." Probably many readers will share M. Dutens's doubts on this head. The story, however, assumes its least improbable aspect when the fact of the Chevalier's conversion is understood to have been generally recognised.

With his stay in Rome, Charles Edward's Protestantism steadily declined. His Scottish friends express great anxiety that he should quit Italy, and at one time a project seems to have been entertained of his visiting Scotland,—of course, incognito. Complaints are made of his equivocal conduct in continuing Roman Catholic priests in his household and attending Roman Catholic places of worship. Then come grievous reports of his habits of tippling, and a story that in a fit of intoxication he had dismissed all his Scottish attendants, and that their places, through the influence of the Cardinal, had been promptly filled by Italians. He had retained, however, his Protestant chaplain, Mr. Wagstaffe, an Englishman, and his faithful Scottish servant, John Stewart;—although the Cardinal, it was said, would gladly have seen these also dismissed. His correspondents are assured that he only remains in Rome in the hope of obtaining a recognition of his titles and a pension from the new Pope. And presently his adherents are comforted by the intelligence that he is leading a more regular life, is punctual in the payment of his bills; rising at four, taking breakfast about seven, dining at twelve on the plainest dishes, drinking tea at four, supping between seven and eight, and retiring to his bed-chamber by nine, or even earlier. His intemperance has become a thing of the past, and he has given proof of his Divine right by curing various diseases by royal touch, in the old orthodox way. Further, the Jacobites are stirred anew with hopes by reason of the Wilkes tumults and the commercial difficulties of England. In November, 1770, Bishop Gordon, the nonjuring clergyman who had baptized the prince's eldest child by Mrs. Walkenshaw, informs his Jacobite correspondents:—"Cousin Peggy [the Chevalier] is still lively, active, and ready for employment; and now troubles seem to be rising in the world more and more, I think it not improbable but she may find occasion for the exercise of her talents."

In April, 1772, came the Chevalier's marriage with the Princess Louisa of Stolberg, and, of course, great rejoicing among the Jacobites. It was the doom of these poor gentlemen to find ever their hopes

betrayed, and their joy turned to sorrow. They toasted the Princess in terms that were cordial if somewhat coarse, and looked forward to a happy continuance of the Stuart line. How miserably the marriage resulted all the world knows. The bridegroom was fifty-two; the bride twenty. He proved a very cruel husband; she a faithless wife. After eight years of most wretched wedlock, she quitted him, and eloped with her lover, Alfieri. Eight years later, and Charles sunk under a paralytic stroke. He died at Rome, in 1788, on the 30th of January, the anniversary of his great-grandfather's execution. His attendants, alarmed at the omen, concealed the fact of his death for several hours, and gave out that he had lived through the night, and breathed his last at nine o'clock on the morning of the 31st. "This," writes Lord Stanhope, "was told me by Cardinal Caccia Piatti, who had heard it from one of the Prince's household."

After his marriage there would seem to be no trace of further professions of Protestantism on the part of the Chevalier. He had not, however, abandoned hope of his restoration. Even to the last, with inherent Stuart obstinacy, he clung to the thought that he should live to wear the British crown. This, indeed, became as a vision, consoling, and in some sort illumining, his dotage. His plans were of the very vaguest. He had kept the end in view, but had almost lost sight of the means to it; his Protestantism included. Action was now to come from others rather than himself; but still it was to come; and, after a fashion, he made preparation for it. Under the bed on which he died there was found a strong box containing 12,000 sequins for the expenses for his journey to England, whenever he should suddenly be called thither. The ruling passion prevailed to the end. He was convinced the summons would surely arrive sooner or later, and resolved that the hour should find the man as ready as might be. Meanwhile, he waited and hoped, fortifying himself in the half-crazy manner of his later days with study of the prophecies of Nostradamus, several of which were found among his papers afterwards. His health had long declined; he was terribly weak; he had sunk into a condition of sottish inanity; it was rarely indeed that he could emit any gleams of the old gallant ardour which forty years before had led him to invade England, confront King George's best forces, and fight at Culloden. If he had fallen then, what a poetic aspect his career would ever have worn! Into what dreary prose it degenerated as he lingered on a shattered old man, with mind and body alike enfeebled and decayed, not merely by lapse of time, but by other more pernicious and disastrous influences! The Chevalier of '45 was indeed not to be recognised in the poor dotard of '88.

The funeral obsequies were celebrated by the Cardinal at Frascati, but the coffin was afterwards removed to St. Peter's. Mr. Raikes, in his "Journal," published in 1858, makes mention of the Stuart

papers, and describes as among them a letter written by the Cardinal, in which, sensibly afflicted by his brother's death, he thus speaks of the funeral:—"L'on vit le frère lui-même du défunt, ministre du Dieu, qui fait ou défait les monarques, entouré des écussons en deuil de sa famille, proclamer, avec les paroles de l'Ecriture Sainte, sur le cercueil d'un roi sans royaume, le néant des choses humaines," &c., &c. In no way was allusion made to the deceased's conversion or perversion to Protestantism. It was ignored, regarded as though it had never been; or, at most, considered as a political expedient sufficiently justifiable under the circumstances, but which had hardly succeeded so well as might have been expected, and therefore did not need to be remembered or spoken of to his disadvantage now that the Chevalier had assuredly died in the faith of his father and grandfather, in the odour of sanctity.

In regard to the Stuart Papers, of which frequent mention has been made, it may be noted that they have in their turn been subjected to adventure and vicissitude of a curious kind. George IV., when Prince of Wales, acquired possession of them, in part by the gift of Cardinal Gonsalvi, in part by purchase, and entrusted the examination of them to a commission, which was not dissolved until 1829. The papers had at one time fallen into the possession of a Dr. Walker, a collector of autographs, who might have retained his acquisition if he had been content to be silent and secret on the subject. But a treasure that may not be spoken of, displayed, or employed in any way, is hardly a treasure at all. Rome was full of English people, and the collector could not resist inviting certain of his compatriots to inspect his documents. The Duchess of Devonshire and a select circle of friends met therefore at the doctor's house on an appointed evening. Unfortunately, among the visitors there happened to be the Cardinal-Secrétaire, who had been named one of the executors of the will of the late Cardinal York, and whose secretary, the Abbé Lupi, had, unknown to his superior, privately disposed of the papers, in ignorance of their value, to Dr. Walker for the trifling sum of three hundred crowns. The evening was spent in considering the manuscripts. The Cardinal said little, contenting himself with a cursory examination. Nothing in his manner betrayed the action he contemplated in the matter. But on the following morning Dr. Walker's apartment was invested by a detachment of the papal carabinieri, and an agent of police placed a seal on all his papers, while two sentinels kept guard at his door during the rest of the day. In the end the doctor was deprived of his manuscripts; his purchase-money was returned to him, and when he protested against the arbitrary injustice of the proceeding, he was informed that he must address himself to the King of England, who was the rightful heir, and to whom the papers had been forwarded. The papers were deposited in the Royal Library at its formation by William IV.

AN EDITOR'S TALES.

No. II.

MARY GRESLEY.

WE have known many prettier girls than Mary Gresley, and many handsomer women,—but we never knew girl or woman gifted with a face which in supplication was more suasive, in grief more sad, in mirth more merry. It was a face that compelled sympathy, and it did so with the conviction on the mind of the sympathiser that the girl was altogether unconscious of her own power. In her intercourse with us there was, alas! much more of sorrow than of mirth, and we may truly say that in her sufferings we suffered; but still there came to us from our intercourse with her much of delight mingled with the sorrow; and that delight arose, partly no doubt from her woman's charms, from the bright eye, the beseeching mouth, the soft little hand, and the feminine grace of her unpretending garments; but chiefly, we think, from the extreme humanity of the girl. She had little, indeed none, of that which the world calls society, but yet she was pre-eminently social. Her troubles were very heavy, but she was making ever an unconscious effort to throw them aside, and to be jocund in spite of their weight. She would even laugh at them, and at herself as bearing them. She was a little fair-haired creature, with broad brow and small nose and dimpled chin, with no brightness of complexion, no luxuriance of hair, no swelling glory of bust and shoulders; but with a pair of eyes which, as they looked at you, would be gemmed always either with a tear or with some spark of laughter, and with a mouth in the corners of which was ever lurking some little spark of humour, unless when some unspoken prayer seemed to be hanging on her lips. Of woman's vanity she had absolutely none. Of her corporeal self, as having charms to rivet man's love, she thought no more than does a dog. It was a fault with her that she lacked that quality of womanhood. To be loved was to her all the world; unconscious desire for the admiration of men was as strong in her as in other women; and her instinct taught her, as such instincts do teach all women, that such love and admiration was to be the fruit of what feminine gifts she possessed; but the gifts on which she depended,—depending on them without thinking on the matter,—were her softness, her trust, her woman's weakness, and that power of supplicating by her eye without putting her petition into words which was absolutely irresistible. Where is

the man of fifty, who in the course of his life has not learned to love some woman simply because it has come in his way to help her, and to be good to her in her struggles? And if added to that source of affection there be brightness, some spark of humour, social gifts, and a strong flavour of that which we have ventured to call humanity, such love may become almost a passion without the addition of much real beauty.

But in thus talking of love we must guard ourselves somewhat from miscomprehension. In love with Mary Gresley, after the common sense of the word, we never were, nor would it have become us to be so. Had such a state of being unfortunately befallen us, we certainly should be silent on the subject. We were married and old; she was very young, and engaged to be married, always talking to us of her engagement as a thing fixed as the stars. She looked upon us, no doubt,—after she had ceased to regard us simply in our editorial capacity,—as a subsidiary old uncle whom Providence had supplied to her, in order, that if it were possible, the troubles of her life might be somewhat eased by assistance to her from that special quarter. We regarded her first almost as a child, and then as a young woman to whom we owed that sort of protecting care which a greybeard should ever be ready to give to the weakness of feminine adolescence. Nevertheless we were in love with her, and we think such a state of love to be a wholesome and natural condition. We might, indeed, have loved her grandmother,—but the love would have been very different. Had circumstances brought us into connection with her grandmother, we hope we should have done our duty, and had that old lady been our friend we should, we trust, have done it with alacrity. But in our intercourse with Mary Gresley there was more than that. She charmed us. We learned to love the hue of that dark grey stuff frock which she seemed always to wear. When she would sit in the low arm-chair opposite to us, looking up into our eyes as we spoke to her words which must often have stabbed her little heart, we were wont to caress her with that inward undemonstrative embrace that one spirit is able to confer upon another. We thought of her constantly, perplexing our mind for her succour. We forgave all her faults. We exaggerated her virtues. We exerted ourselves for her with a zeal that was perhaps fatuous. Though we attempted sometimes to look black at her, telling her that our time was too precious to be wasted in conversation with her, she soon learned to know how welcome she was to us. Her glove,—which, by-the-bye, was never tattered, though she was very poor,—was an object of regard to us. Her grandmother's gloves would have been as unacceptable to us as any other morsel of old kid or cotton. Our heart bled for her. Now the heart may suffer much for the sorrows of a male friend, but it may hardly for such be said to bleed. We loved her, in short, as we should not have loved her, but that she was young and gentle, and

could smile,—and, above all, but that she looked at us with those bright, beseeching, tear-laden eyes.

Sterne, in his latter days, when very near his end, wrote passionate love-letters to various women, and has been called hard names by Thackeray,—not for writing them, but because he thus showed himself to be incapable of that sincerity which should have bound him to one love. We do not ourselves much admire the sentimentalism of Sterne, finding the expression of it to be mawkish, and thinking that too often he misses the pathos for which he strives from a want of appreciation on his own part of that which is really vigorous in language and touching in sentiment. But we think that Thackeray has been somewhat wrong in throwing that blame on Sterne's heart which should have been attributed to his taste. The love which he declared when he was old and sick and dying,—a worn out wreck of a man,—disgusts us, not because it was felt, or not felt, but because it was told ;—and told as though the teller meant to offer more than that warmth of sympathy which woman's strength and woman's weakness combined will ever produce in the hearts of certain men. This is a sympathy with which neither age, nor crutches, nor matrimony, nor position of any sort need consider itself to be incompatible. It is unreasoning, and perhaps irrational. It gives to outward form and grace that which only inward merit can deserve. It is very dangerous because, unless watched, it leads to words which express that which is not intended. But, though it may be controlled, it cannot be killed. He, who is of his nature open to such impression, will feel it while breath remains to him. It was that which destroyed the character and happiness of Swift, and which made Sterne contemptible. We do not doubt that such unreasoning sympathy, exacted by feminine attraction, was always strong in Johnson's heart ;—but Johnson was strong all over, and could guard himself equally from misconduct and from ridicule. Such sympathy with women, such incapability of withstanding the feminine magnet was very strong with Goethe,—who could guard himself from ridicule, but not from misconduct. To us the child of whom we are speaking, —for she was so then,—was ever a child. But she bore in her hand the power of that magnet, and we admit that the needle within our bosom was swayed by it. Her story,—such as we have to tell it,—was as follows.

Mary Gresley, at the time when we first knew her, was eighteen years old, and was the daughter of a medical practitioner, who had lived and died in a small town in one of the northern counties. For facility in telling our story we will call that town Cornboro. Dr. Gresley, as he seemed to have been called though without proper claim to the title, had been a diligent man, and fairly successful,—except in this, that he died before he had been able to provide for those whom he left behind him. The widow still had her own

modest fortune, amounting to some eighty pounds a year; and that, with the furniture of her house, was her whole wealth, when she found herself thus left with the weight of the world upon her shoulders. There was one other daughter older than Mary, whom we never saw, but who was always mentioned as poor Fanny. There had been no sons, and the family consisted of the mother and the two girls. Mary had been only fifteen when her father died, and up to that time had been regarded quite as a child by all who had known her. Mrs. Gresley, in the hour of her need, did as widows do in such cases. She sought advice from her clergyman and neighbours, and was counselled to take a lodger into her house. No lodger could be found so fitting as the curate, and when Mary was seventeen years old, she and the curate were engaged to be married. The curate paid thirty pounds a year for his lodgings, and on this, with their own little income, the widow and her two daughters had managed to live. The engagement was known to them all as soon as it had been known to Mary. The love-making, indeed, had gone on beneath the eyes of the mother. There had been not only no deceit, no privacy, no separate interests, but, as far as we ever knew, no question as to prudence in the making of the engagement. The two young people had been brought together, had loved each other, as was so natural, and had become engaged as a matter of course. It was an event as easy to be foretold, or at least as easy to be believed, as the pairing of two birds. From what we heard of this curate, the Rev. Arthur Donne,—for we never saw him,—we fancy that he was a simple, pious, commonplace young man, imbued with a strong idea that in being made a priest he had been invested with a nobility and with some special capacity beyond that of other men, slight in body, weak in health, but honest, true, and warm-hearted. Then, the engagement having been completed, there arose the question of matrimony. The salary of the curate was a hundred a year. The whole income of the vicar, an old man, was, after payment made to his curate, two hundred a year. Could the curate, in such circumstances, afford to take to himself a pennyless wife of seventeen. Mrs. Gresley was willing that the marriage should take place, and that they should all do as best they might on their joint income. The vicar's wife, who seems to have been a strong-minded, sage, though somewhat hard woman, took Mary aside, and told her that such a thing must not be. There would come, she said, children, and destitution, and ruin. She knew perhaps more than Mary knew when Mary told us her story, sitting opposite to us in the low arm-chair. It was the advice of the vicar's wife that the engagement should be broken off; but that, if the breaking of the engagement were impossible, there should be an indefinite period of waiting. Such engagements cannot be broken off. Young hearts will not consent to be thus torn asunder. The vicar's wife was too strong

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for them to get themselves married in her teeth, and the period of indefinite waiting was commenced.

And now for a moment we will go farther back among Mary's youthful days. Child as she seemed to be, she had in very early years taken a pen in her hand. The reader need hardly be told that had not such been the case there would not have arisen any cause for friendship between her and me. We are telling an Editor's tale, and it was in our editorial capacity that Mary first came to us. Well;—in her earliest attempts, in her very young days, she wrote,—heaven knows what; poetry first no doubt; then, God help her, a tragedy; after that, when the curate-influence first commenced, tales for the conversion of the ungodly;—and at last, before her engagement was a fact, having tried her wing at fiction, in the form of those false little dialogues between Tom the Saint and Bob the Sinner, she had completed a novel in one volume. She was then seventeen, was engaged to be married, and had completed her novel! Passing her in the street you would almost have taken her for a child to whom you might give an orange.

Hitherto her work had come from ambition,—or from a feeling of somewhat restless piety inspired by the curate. Now there arose in her young mind the question whether such talent as she possessed might not be turned to account for ways and means, and used to shorten, perhaps absolutely to annihilate, that uncertain period of waiting. The first novel was seen by "a man of letters" in her neighbourhood, who pronounced it to be very clever;—not indeed fit as yet for publication, faulty in grammar, faulty even in spelling,—how I loved the tear that shone in her eye as she confessed this delinquency!—faulty of course in construction, and faulty in character;—but still clever. The man of letters had told her that she must begin again.

Unfortunate man of letters in having thrust upon him so terrible a task! In such circumstances what is the candid, honest, soft-hearted man of letters to do? "Go, girl, and mend your stockings. Learn to make a pie. If you work hard, it may be that some day your intellect will suffice to you to read a book and understand it. For the writing of a book that shall either interest or instruct a brother human being many gifts are required. Have you just reason to believe that they have been given to you?" That is what the candid, honest man of letters says who is not soft-hearted;—and in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred it will probably be the truth. The soft-hearted man of letters remembers that this case may be the hundredth; and, unless the blotted manuscript submitted to him is conclusive against such possibility, he reconciles it to his conscience to tune his counsel to that hope. Who can say that he is wrong? Unless such evidence be conclusive, who can venture to declare that this aspirant may not be the one who shall succeed? Who in such

emergency does not remember the day in which he also was one of the hundred of whom the ninety-and-nine must fail?—and will not remember also the many convictions on his own mind that he certainly would not be the one appointed? The man of letters in the neighbourhood of Cornboro to whom poor Mary's manuscript was shown was not sufficiently hard-hearted to make any strong attempt to deter her. He made no reference to the easy stockings, or the wholesome pie,—pointed out the manifest faults which he saw, and added,—we do not doubt with much more energy than he threw into his words of censure,—his comfortable assurance that there was great promise in the work. Mary Gresley that evening burned the manuscript, and began another, with the dictionary close at her elbow.

Then, during her work, there occurred two circumstances which brought upon her,—and, indeed, upon the household to which she belonged,—intense sorrow and greatly increased trouble. The first of these applied more especially to herself. The Rev. Arthur Donne did not approve of novels,—of other novels than those dialogues between Tom and Bob, of the falsehood of which he was unconscious,—and expressed a desire that the writing of them should be abandoned. How far the lover went in his attempt to enforce obedience we, of course, could not know; but he pronounced the edict, and the edict, though not obeyed, created tribulation. Then there came forth another edict which had to be obeyed,—an edict from the probable successor of the late Dr. Gresley,—ordering the poor curate to seek employment in some clime more congenial to his state of health than that in which he was then living. He was told that his throat and lungs and general apparatus for living and preaching were not strong enough for those hyperborean springs, and that he must seek a southern climate. He did do so, and, before I became acquainted with Mary, had transferred his services to a small town in Dorsetshire. The engagement, of course, was to be as valid as ever, though matrimony must be postponed, more indefinitely even than heretofore. But if Mary could write novels and sell them, then how glorious would it be to follow her lover into Dorsetshire! The Rev. Arthur Donne went, and the curate who came in his place was a married man, wanting a house, and not lodgings. So Mary Gresley persevered with her second novel, and completed it before she was eighteen.

The literary friend in the neighbourhood,—to the chance of whose acquaintance I was indebted for my subsequent friendship with Mary Gresley,—found this work to be a great improvement on the first. He was an elderly man who had been engaged nearly all his life in the conduct of a scientific and agricultural periodical, and was the last man whom I should have taken as a sound critic on works of fiction;—but with spelling, grammatical construction, and the composition of sentences he was acquainted; and he assured Mary that

her progress had been great. Should she burn that second story? she asked him. She would if he so recommended, and begin another the next day. Such was not his advice. "I have a friend in London," said he, "who has to do with such things, and you shall go to him. I will give you a letter." He gave her the fatal letter, and she came to us.

She came up to town with her novel; but not only with her novel, for she brought her mother with her. So great was her eloquence, so excellent her suasive power either with her tongue or by that look of supplication in her face, that she induced her mother to abandon her home in Cornboro, and trust herself to London lodgings. The house was let furnished to the new curate, and when I first heard of the Gresleys they were living on the second floor in a small street near to the Euston Square station. Poor Fanny, as she was called, was left in some humble home at Cornboro, and Mary travelled up to try her fortune in the great city. When we came to know her well we expressed our doubts as to the wisdom of such a step. Yes; the vicar's wife had been strong against the move. Mary confessed as much. That lady had spoken most forcible words, had uttered terrible predictions, had told sundry truths. But Mary had prevailed, and the journey was made, and the lodgings were taken.

We can now come to the day on which we first saw her. She did not write, but came direct to us with her manuscript in her hand. "A young woman, sir, wants to see you," said the clerk, in that tone to which we were so well accustomed, and which indicated the dislike which he had learned from us to the reception of unknown visitors.

"Young woman! What young woman?"

"Well, sir; she is a very young woman;—quite a girl like."

"I suppose she has got a name. Who sent her? I cannot see any young woman without knowing why. What does she want?"

"Got a manuscript in her hand, sir."

"I've no doubt she has, and a ton of manuscript in drawers and cupboards. Tell her to write. I won't see any woman, young or old, without knowing who she is." The man retired, and soon returned with an envelope belonging to the office, on which was written, "Miss Mary Gresley, late of Cornboro." He also brought me a note from "the man of letters" down in Dorsetshire. "Of what sort is she?" I asked, looking at the introduction.

"She ain't amiss as to looks," said the clerk; "and she's modest-like." Now certainly it is the fact that all female literary aspirants are not "modest-like." We read our friend's letter through, while poor Mary was standing at the counter below. How eagerly should we have run to greet her, to save her from the gaze of the public, to welcome her at least with a chair and the warmth of our editorial fire, had we guessed then what were her qualities! It was not long

before she knew the way up to our sanctum without any clerk to show her, and not long before we knew well the sound of that low but not timid knock at our door made always with the handle of the parasol, with which her advent was heralded. We will confess that there was always music to our ears in that light tap from the little round wooden knob. The man of letters in Dorsetshire, whom we had known well for many years, had been never known to us with intimacy. We had bought with him and sold with him, had talked with him and, perhaps, walked with him; but he was not one with whom we had eaten, or drunk, or prayed. A dull, well-instructed, honest man he was, fond of his money, and, as we had thought, as unlikely as any man to be waked to enthusiasm by the ambitious dreams of a young girl. But Mary had been potent even over him, and he had written to me, saying that Miss Gresley was a young lady of exceeding promise, in respect of whom he had a strong presentiment that she would rise, if not to eminence, at least to a good position as a writer. "But she is very young," he added. Having read this letter, we at last desired our clerk to send the lady up.

We remember her step as she came to the door, timid enough then,—hesitating, but yet with an assumed lightness as though she was determined to show us that she was not ashamed of what she was doing. She had on her head a light straw hat, such as then was very unusual in London,—and is not now, we believe, commonly worn in the streets of the metropolis by ladies who believe themselves to know what they are about. But it was a hat, worn upon her head, and not a straw plate done up with ribbons, and reaching down the incline of the forehead as far as the top of the nose. And she was dressed in a grey stuff frock, with a little black band round her waist. As far as our memory goes, we never saw her in any other dress, or with other hat or bonnet on her head. "And what can we do for you,—Miss Gresley?" we said, standing up and holding the literary gentleman's letter in our hand. We had almost said, "my dear," seeing her youth and remembering our own age. We were afterwards glad that we had not so addressed her; though it came before long that we did call her "my dear,"—in quite another spirit.

She recoiled a little from the tone of our voice, but recovered herself at once. "Mr. — thinks that you can do something for me. I have written a novel, and I have brought it to you."

"You are very young, are you not, to have written a novel?"

"I am young," she said, "but perhaps older than you think. I am eighteen." Then for the first time there came into her eye that gleam of a merry humour which never was allowed to dwell there long, but which was so alluring when it showed itself.

"That is a ripe age," we said laughing, and then we bade her seat herself. At once we began to pour forth that long and dull and ugly

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lesson which is so common to our life, in which we tried to explain to our unwilling pupil that of all respectable professions for young women literature is the most uncertain, the most heart-breaking, and the most dangerous. "You hear of the few who are remunerated," we said; "but you hear nothing of the thousands that fail."

"It is so noble!" she replied.

"But so hopeless."

"There are those who succeed."

"Yes, indeed. Even in a lottery one must gain the prize; but they who trust to lotteries break their hearts."

"But literature is not a lottery. If I am fit, I shall succeed. Mr. — thinks I may succeed." Many more words of wisdom we spoke to her, and well do we remember her reply when we had run all our line off the reel, and had completed our sermon. "I shall go on all the same," she said. "I shall try, and try again,—and again."

Her power over us, to a certain extent, was soon established. Of course we promised to read the MS., and turned it over, no doubt with an anxious countenance, to see of what nature was the writing. There is a feminine scrawl of a nature so terrible that the task of reading becomes worse than the treadmill. "I know I can write well, —though I am not quite sure about the spelling," said Mary, as she observed the glance of our eyes. She spoke truly. The writing was good, though the erasures and alterations were very numerous. And then the story was intended to fill only one volume. "I will copy it for you if you wish it," said Mary. "Though there are so many scratchings out, it has been copied once." We would not for worlds have given her such labour, and then we promised to read the tale. We forget how it was brought about, but she told us at that interview that her mother had obtained leave from the pastry-cook round the corner to sit there waiting till Mary should rejoin her. "I thought it would be trouble enough for you to have one of us here," she said with her little laugh when I asked her why she had not brought her mother on with her. I own that I felt that she had been wise; and when I told her that if she would call on me again that day week I would then have read at any rate so much of her work as would enable me to give her my opinion, I did not invite her to bring her mother with her. I knew that I could talk more freely to the girl without the mother's presence. Even when you are past fifty, and intend only to preach a sermon, you do not wish to have a mother present.

When she was gone we took up the roll of paper and examined it. We looked at the division into chapters, at the various mottoes the poor child had chosen, pronounced to ourselves the name of the story,—it was simply the name of the heroine, an easy-going, unaffected, well-chosen name,—and read the last page of it. On such occasions the reader of the work begins his task almost with a conviction that the labour which he is about to undertake will be utterly

thrown away. He feels all but sure that the matter will be bad, that it will be better for all parties, writer, intended readers, and intended publisher, that the written words should not be conveyed into type,—that it will be his duty after some fashion to convey that unwelcome opinion to the writer, and that the writer will go away incredulous, and accusing mentally the Mentor of the moment of all manner of literary sins, among which ignorance, jealousy, and falsehood, will, in the poor author's imagination, be most prominent. And yet when the writer was asking for that opinion, declaring his especial desire that the opinion should be candid, protesting that his present wish is to have some gauge of his own capability, and that he has come to you believing you to be above others able to give him that gauge,—while his petition to you was being made, he was in every respect sincere. He had come desirous to measure himself, and had believed that you could measure him. When coming he did not think that you would declare him to be an Apollo. He had told himself, no doubt, how probable it was that you would point out to him that he was a dwarf. You find him to be an ordinary man, measuring perhaps five feet seven, and unable to reach the standard of the particular regiment in which he is ambitious of serving. You tell him so in what civillest words you know, and you are at once convicted in his mind of jealousy, ignorance, and falsehood! And yet he is perhaps a most excellent fellow,—and capable of performing the best of service, only in some other regiment! As we looked at Miss Gresley's manuscript, tumbling it through our hands, we expected even from her some such result. She had gained two things from us already by her outward and inward gifts, such as they were,—first that we would read her story, and secondly that we would read it quickly; but she had not as yet gained from us any belief that by reading it we could serve it.

We did read it,—the most of it before we left our editorial chair on that afternoon, so that we lost altogether the daily walk so essential to our editorial health, and were put to the expense of a cab on our return home. And we incurred some minimum of domestic discomfort from the fact that we did not reach our own door till twenty minutes after our appointed dinner hour. "I have this moment come from the office as hard as a cab could bring me," we said in answer to the mildest of reproaches, explaining nothing as to the nature of the cause which had kept us so long at our work.

We must not allow our readers to suppose that the intensity of our application had arisen from the overwhelming interest of the story. It was not that the story entranced us, but that our feeling for the writer grew as we read the story. It was simple, unaffected, and almost painfully unsensational. It contained, as I came to perceive afterwards, little more than a recital of what her imagination told her might too probably be the result of her own engagement. It was the story of two young people who become engaged and cannot be mar-

ried. After a course of years the man, with many true arguments, asks to be absolved. The woman yields with an expressed conviction that her lover is right, settles herself down for maiden life, then breaks her heart and dies. The character of the man was utterly untrue to Nature. That of the woman was true, but commonplace. Other interest, or other character there was none. The dialogues between the lovers were many and tedious, and hardly a word was spoken between them which two lovers really would have uttered. It was clearly not a work as to which I could tell my little friend that she might depend upon it for fame or fortune. When I had finished it I was obliged to tell myself that I could not advise her even to publish it. But yet I could not say that she had mistaken her own powers or applied herself to a profession beyond her reach. There was a grace and delicacy in her work which were charming. Occasionally she escaped from the trammels of grammar, but only so far that it would be a pleasure to point out to her her errors. There was not a word that a young lady should not have written; and there were throughout the whole evident signs of honest work. We had six days to think it over between our completion of the task and her second visit.

She came exactly at the hour appointed, and seated herself at once in the arm-chair before us as soon as the young man had closed the door behind him. There had been no great occasion for nervousness at her first visit, and she had then, by an evident effort, overcome the diffidence incidental to a meeting with a stranger. But now she did not attempt to conceal her anxiety. "Well," she said, leaning forward, and looking up into our face, with her two hands folded together.

Even though Truth, standing full panoplied at our elbow, had positively demanded it, we could not have told her then to mend her stockings and bake her pies and desert the calling that she had chosen. She was simply irresistible, and would, we fear, have constrained us into falsehood had the question been between falsehood and absolute reprobation of her work. To have spoken hard, heart-breaking words to her, would have been like striking a child when it comes to kiss you. We fear that we were not absolutely true at first, and that by that absence of truth we made subsequent pain more painful. "Well," she said, looking up into our face. "Have you read it?" We told her that we had read every word of it. "And it is no good?"

We fear that we began by telling her that it certainly was good,—after a fashion, very good,—considering her youth and necessary inexperience, very good indeed. As we said this she shook her head, and sent out a spark or two from her eyes, intimating her conviction that excuses or quasi praise founded on her youth would avail her nothing. "Would anybody buy it from me?" she asked. No;—

we did not think that any publisher would pay her money for it. "Would they print it for me without costing me anything?" Then we told her the truth as nearly as we could. She lacked experience; and if, as she had declared to us before, she was determined to persevere, she must try again, and must learn more of that lesson of the world's ways which was so necessary to those who attempted to teach that lesson to others. "But I shall try again at once," she said. We shook our head, endeavouring to shake it kindly. "Currer Bell was only a young girl when she succeeded," she added. The injury which Currer Bell did after this fashion was almost equal to that perpetrated by Jack Sheppard.

She remained with us then for above an hour;—for more than two probably, though the time was not specially marked by us; and before her visit was brought to a close she had told us of her engagement with the curate. Indeed, we believe that the greater part of her little history as hitherto narrated was made known to us on that occasion. We asked after her mother early in the interview, and learned that she was not on this occasion kept waiting at the pastry-cook's shop. Mary had come alone, making use of some friendly omnibus, of which she had learned the route. When she told us that she and her mother had come up to London solely with the view of forwarding her views in her intended profession, we ventured to ask whether it would not be wiser for them to return to Cornboro, seeing how improbable it was that she would have matter fit for the press within any short period. Then she explained that they had calculated that they would be able to live in London for twelve months, if they spent nothing except on absolute necessities. The poor girl seemed to keep back nothing from us. "We have clothes that will carry us through, and we shall be very careful. I came in an omnibus;—but I shall walk if you will let me come again." Then she asked me for advice. How was she to set about further work with the best chance of turning it to account?

It had been altogether the fault of that retired literary gentleman down in the North, who had obtained what standing he had in the world of letters by writing about guano and the cattle plague. Divested of all responsibility, and fearing no further trouble to himself, he had ventured to tell this girl that her work was full of promise. Promise means probability, and in this case there was nothing beyond a most remote chance. That she and her mother should have left their little household gods, and come up to London on such a chance, was a thing terrible to the mind. But we felt before these two hours were over that we could not throw her off now. We had become old friends, and there had been that between us which gave her a positive claim upon our time. She had sat in our arm-chair, leaning forward with her elbows on her knees and her hands stretched out, till we, caught by the charm of her unstudied

intimacy, had wheeled round our chair, and had placed ourselves, as nearly as the circumstances would admit, in the same position. The magnetism had already begun to act upon us. We soon found ourselves taking it for granted that she was to remain in London and begin another book. It was impossible to resist her. Before the interview was over, we, who had been conversant with all these matters before she was born; we, who had latterly come to regard our own editorial fault as being chiefly that of personal harshness; we, who had repulsed aspirant novelists by the score,—we had consented to be a party to the creation, if not to the actual writing, of this new book!

It was to be done after this fashion. She was to fabricate a plot, and to bring it to us, written on two sides of a sheet of letter paper. On the reverse sides we were to criticise this plot, and prepare emendations. Then she was to make out skeletons of the men and women who were afterwards to be clothed with flesh and made alive with blood, and covered with cuticles. After that she was to arrange her proportions; and at last, before she began to write the story, she was to describe in detail such part of it as was to be told in each chapter. On every advancing wavelet of the work we were to give her our written remarks. All this we promised to do because of the quiver in her lip, and the alternate tear and sparkle in her eye. "Now that I have found a friend, I feel sure that I can do it," she said, as she held our hand tightly before she left us.

In about a month, during which she had twice written to us, and twice been answered, she came with her plot. It was the old story, with some additions and some change. There was matrimony instead of death at the end, and an old aunt was brought in for the purpose of relenting and producing an income. We added a few details, feeling as we did so that we were the very worst of botchers. We doubt now whether the old, sad, simple story was not the better of the two. Then, after another lengthened interview, we sent our pupil back to create her skeletons. When she came with the skeletons we were dear friends, and we had learned to call her Mary. Then it was that she first sat at our editorial table, and wrote a love-letter to the curate. It was then mid-winter, wanting but a few days to Christmas, and Arthur, as she called him, did not like the cold weather. "He does not say so," she said, "but I fear he is ill. Don't you think there are some people with whom everything is unfortunate?" She wrote her letter, and had recovered her spirits before she took her leave.

We then proposed to her to bring her mother to dine with us on Christmas Day. We had made a clean breast of it at home in regard to our heart-flutterings, and had been met with a suggestion that some kindness might with propriety be shown to the old lady as well as to the young one. We had felt grateful to the old lady for not

coming to our office with her daughter, and had at once assented. When we made the suggestion to Mary there came first a blush over all her face, and then there followed the well-known smile before the blush was gone. "You'll all be dressed fine," she said. We protested that not a garment would be changed by any of the family after the decent church-going in the morning. "Just as I am?" she asked. "Just as you are," we said, looking at the dear grey frock, adding some mocking assertion that no possible combination of millinery could improve her. "And mamma will be just the same? Then we will come," she said. We told her an absolute falsehood, as to some necessity which would take us in a cab to Euston Square on the afternoon of that Christmas Day, so that we could call and bring them both to our house without trouble or expense. "You shan't do anything of the kind," she said. However we swore to our falsehood,—perceiving, as we did so, that she did not believe a word of it; but in the matter of the cab we had our own way.

We found the mother to be what we had expected,—a weak, lady-like, lachrymose old lady, endowed with a profound admiration for her daughter, and so bashful that she could not at all enjoy her plum-pudding. We think that Mary did enjoy hers thoroughly. She made a little speech to the mistress of the house, praising ourselves with warm words and tearful eyes, and immediately won the heart of a new friend. She allied herself warmly to our daughters, put up with the schoolboy pleasantries of our sons, and before the evening was over was dressed up as a ghost for the amusement of some neighbouring children who were brought in to play snapdragon. Mrs. Gresley, as she drank her tea and crumbled her bit of cake, seated on a distant sofa, was not so happy, partly because she remembered her old gown, and partly because our wife was a stranger to her. Mary had forgotten both circumstances before the dinner was half over. She was the sweetest ghost that ever was seen. How pleasant would be our ideas of departed spirits if such ghosts would visit us frequently!

They repeated their visits to us not unfrequently during the twelve-months; but as the whole interest attaching to our intercourse had reference to circumstances which took place in that editorial room of ours, it will not be necessary to refer further to the hours, very pleasant to ourselves, which she spent with us in our domestic life. She was ever made welcome when she came, and was known by us as a dear, well-bred, modest, clever little girl. The novel went on. That catalogue of the skeletons gave us more trouble than all the rest, and many were the tears which she shed over it, and sad were the misgivings by which she was afflicted, though never vanquished! How was it to be expected that a girl of eighteen should portray characters such as she had never known? In her intercourse with the curate all the intellect had been on her side. She had loved

him because it was requisite to her to love some one; and now, as she had loved him, she was as true as steel to him. But there had been almost nothing for her to learn from him. The plan of the novel went on, and as it did so we became more and more despondent as to its success. And through it all we knew how contrary it was to our own judgment to expect, even to dream of, anything but failure. Though we went on working with her, finding it to be quite impossible to resist her entreaties, we did tell her from day to day that, even presuming she were entitled to hope for ultimate success, she must go through an apprenticeship of ten years before she could reach it. Then she would sit silent, repressing her tears, and searching for arguments with which to support her cause.

"Working hard is apprenticeship," she said to us once.

"Yes, Mary; but the work will be more useful, and the apprenticeship more wholesome, if you will take them for what they are worth."

"I shall be dead in ten years," she said.

"If you thought so you would not intend to marry Mr. Donne. But even, were it certain that such would be your fate, how can that alter the state of things? The world will know nothing of that; and if it did, would the world buy your book out of pity?"

"I want no one to pity me," she said; "but I want you to help me." So we went on helping her. At the end of four months she had not put pen to paper on the absolute body of her projected novel; and yet she had worked daily at it, arranging its future construction.

During the next month, when we were in the middle of March, a gleam of real success came to her. We had told her frankly that we would publish nothing of hers in the periodical which we were ourselves conducting. She had become too dear to us for us not to feel that were we to do so, we should be doing it rather for her sake than for that of our readers. But we did procure for her the publication of two short stories elsewhere. For these she received twelve guineas, and it seemed to her that she had found an *El Dorado* of literary wealth. I shall never forget her ecstasy when she knew that her work would be printed, or her renewed triumph when the first humble cheque was given into her hands. There are those who will think that such a triumph, as connected with literature, must be sordid. For ourselves, we are ready to acknowledge that money payment for work done is the best and most honest test of success. We are sure that it is so felt by young barristers and young doctors, and we do not see why rejoicing on such realisation of long-cherished hope should be more vile with the literary aspirant than with them. "What do you think I'll do first with it?" she said. We thought she meant to send something to her lover, and we told her so. "I'll buy mamma a bonnet to go to church in. I didn't tell you before, but she hasn't been these three Sundays because she hasn't one fit to

be seen." I changed the cheque for her, and she went off and bought the bonnet.

Though I was successful for her in regard to the two stories, I could not go beyond that. We could have filled pages of periodicals with her writing had we been willing that she should work without remuneration. She herself was anxious for such work, thinking that it would lead to something better. But we opposed it, and, indeed, would not permit it, believing that work so done can be serviceable to none but those who accept it that pages may be filled without cost.

During the whole winter, while she was thus working, she was in a state of alarm about her lover. Her hope was ever that when warm weather came he would again be well and strong. We know nothing sadder than such hope founded on such source. For does not the winter follow the summer, and then again comes the killing spring? At this time she used to read us passages from his letters, in which he seemed to speak of little but his own health. In her literary ambition he never seemed to have taken part since she had declared her intention of writing profane novels. As regarded him, his sole merit to us seemed to be in his truth to her. He told her that in his opinion they two were as much joined together as though the service of the Church had bound them; but even in saying that he spoke ever of himself and not of her. Well;—May came, dangerous, doubtful, deceitful May, and he was worse. Then, for the first time, the dread word, Consumption, passed her lips. It had already passed ours, mentally, a score of times. We asked her what she herself would wish to do. Would she desire to go down to Dorsetshire and see him? She thought awhile, and said that she would wait a little longer.

The novel went on, and at length, in June, she was writing the actual words on which, as she thought, so much depended. She had really brought the story into some shape in the arrangement of her chapters; and sometimes even I began to hope. There were moments in which with her hope was almost certainty. Towards the end of June Mr. Donne declared himself to be better. He was to have a holiday in August, and then he intended to run up to London and see his betrothed. He still gave details, which were distressing to us, of his own symptoms; but it was manifest that he himself was not desponding, and she was governed in her trust or in her despair altogether by him. But when August came the period of his visit was postponed. The heat had made him weak, and he was to come in September.

Early in August we ourselves went away for our annual recreation;—not that we shoot grouse, or that we have any strong opinion that August and September are the best months in the year for holiday-making,—but that everybody does go in August. We ourselves are not specially fond of August. In many places to which one goes

a-touring mosquitoes bite in that month. The heat, too, prevents one from walking. The inns are all full, and the railways crowded. April and May are twice pleasanter months in which to see the world and the country. But fashion is everything, and no man or woman will stay in town in August for whom there exists any practicability of leaving it. We went on the 10th,—just as though we had a moor, and one of the last things we did before our departure was to read and revise the last-written chapter of Mary's story.

About the end of September we returned, and up to that time the lover had not come to London. Immediately on our return we wrote to Mary, and the next morning she was with us. She had seated herself on her usual chair before she spoke, and we had taken her hand and asked after herself and her mother. Then, with something of mirth in our tone, we demanded the work which she had done since our departure. "He is dying," she replied.

She did not weep as she spoke. It was not on such occasions as this that the tears filled her eyes. But there was in her face a look of fixed and settled misery which convinced us that she at least did not doubt the truth of her own assertion. We muttered something as to our hope that she was mistaken. "The Doctor, there, has written to tell mamma that it is so. Here is his letter." The doctor's letter was a good letter, written with more of assurance than doctors can generally allow themselves to express. "I fear that I am justified in telling you," said the doctor, "that it can only be a question of weeks." We got up and took her hand. There was not a word to be uttered.

"I must go to him," she said, after a pause.

"Well;—yes. It will be better."

"But we have no money." It must be explained now that offers of slight, very slight, pecuniary aid had been made by us both to Mary and to her mother on more than one occasion. These had been refused with adamantine firmness, but always with something of mirth, or at least of humour, attached to the refusal. The mother would simply refer to the daughter, and Mary would declare that they could manage to see the twelvemonth through and go back to Cornboro, without becoming absolute beggars. She would allude to their joint wardrobe, and would confess that there would not have been a pair of boots between them but for that twelve guineas; and indeed she seemed to have stretched that modest incoming so as to cover a legion of purchases. And of these things she was never ashamed to speak. We think there must have been at least two grey frocks, because the frock was always clean, and never absolutely shabby. Our girls at home declared that they had seen three. Of her frock, as it happened, she never spoke to us, but the new boots and the new gloves, "and ever so many things that I can't tell you about, which we really couldn't have gone without," all came out of

the twelve guineas. That she had taken, not only with delight, but with triumph. But pecuniary assistance from ourselves she had always refused. "It would be a gift," she would say.

"Have it as you like."

"But people don't give other people money."

"Don't they? That's all you know about the world."

"Yes; to beggars. We hope we needn't come to that." It was thus that she always answered us,—but always with something of laughter in her eye, as though their poverty was a joke. Now, when the demand upon her was for that which did not concern her personal comfort, which referred to a matter felt by her to be vitally important, she declared, without a minute's hesitation, that she had not money for the journey.

"Of course you can have money," we said. "I suppose you will go at once?"

"Oh yes;—at once. That is in a day or two,—after he shall have received my letter. Why should I wait?" We sat down to write a cheque, and she, seeing what we were doing, asked how much it was to be. "No;—half that will do," she said. "Mamma will not go. We have talked it over and decided it. Yes; I know all about that. I am going to see my lover,—my dying lover; and I have to beg for the money to take me to him. Of course I am a young girl; but in such a condition am I to stand upon the ceremony of being taken care of? A housemaid wouldn't want to be taken care of at eighteen." We did exactly as she bade us, and then attempted to comfort her while the young man went to get money for the cheque. What consolation was possible? It was simply necessary to admit with frankness that sorrow had come from which there could be no present release. "Yes," she said. "Time will cure it,—in a way. One dies in time, and then of course it is all cured." "One hears of this kind of thing often," she said afterwards, still leaning forward in her chair, still with something of the old expression in her eyes,—something almost of humour in spite of her grief; "but it is the girl who dies. When it is the girl, there isn't, after all, so much harm done. A man goes about the world and can shake it off; and then, there are plenty of girls." We could not tell her how infinitely more important, to our thinking, was her life than that of him whom she was going to see now for the last time; but there did spring up within our mind a feeling, greatly opposed to that conviction which formerly we had endeavoured to impress upon herself,—that she was destined to make for herself a successful career.

She went, and remained by her lover's bed-side for three weeks. She wrote constantly to her mother, and once or twice to ourselves. She never again allowed herself to entertain a gleam of hope, and she spoke of her sorrow as a thing accomplished. In her last interview with us she had hardly alluded to her novel, and in her letters

she never mentioned it. But she did say one word which made us guess what was coming, "You will find me greatly changed in one thing," she said; "so much changed that I need never have troubled you." The day for her return to London was twice postponed, but at last she was brought to leave him: Stern necessity was too strong for her. Let her pinch herself as she might, she must live down in Dorsetshire,—and could not live on his means, which were as narrow as her own. She left him; and on the day after her arrival in London she walked across from Euston Square to our office.

"Yes," she said, "it is all over. I shall never see him again on this side of heaven's gates." I do not know that we ever saw a tear in her eyes produced by her own sorrow. She was possessed of some wonderful strength which seemed to suffice for the bearing of any burden. Then she paused, and we could only sit silent, with our eyes fixed upon the rug. "I have made him a promise," she said at last. Of course we asked her what was the promise, though at the moment we thought that we knew. "I will make no more attempt at novel writing."

"Such a promise should not have been asked,—or given," we said vehemently.

"It should have been asked,—because he thought it right," she answered. "And of course it was given. Must he not know better than I do? Is he not one of God's ordained priests? In all the world is there one so bound to obey him as I?" There was nothing to be said for it at such a moment as that. There is no enthusiasm equal to that produced by a death-bed parting. "I grieve greatly," she said, "that you should have had so much vain labour with a poor girl who can never profit by it."

"I don't believe the labour will have been vain," we answered, having altogether changed those views of ours as to the futility of the pursuit which she had adopted.

"I have destroyed it all," she said.

"What;—burned the novel?"

"Every scrap of it. I told him that I would do so, and that he should know that I had done it. Every page was burned after I got home last night, and then I wrote to him before I went to bed."

"Do you mean that you think it wicked that people should write novels?" we asked.

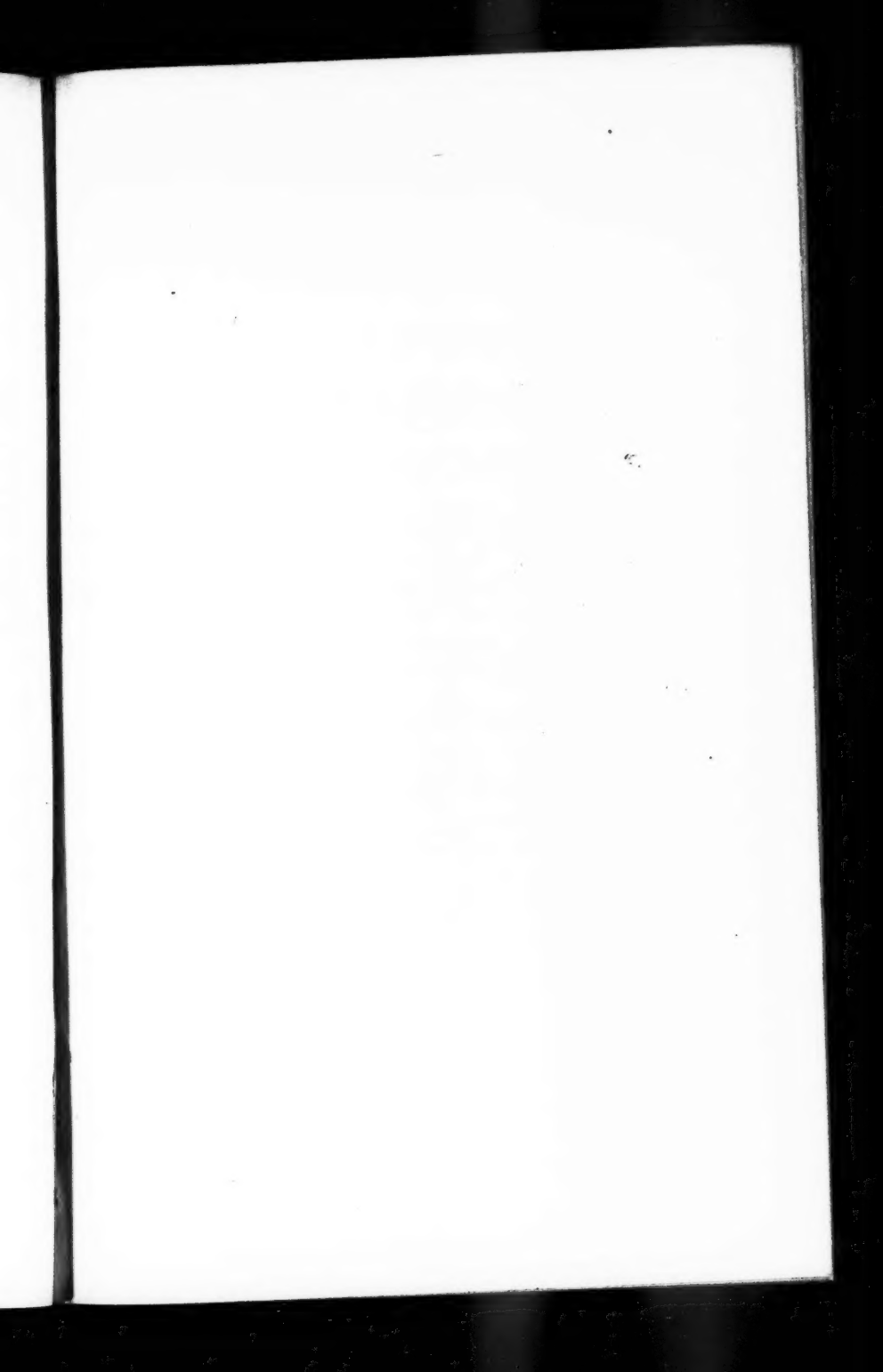
"He thinks it to be a misapplication of God's gifts, and that has been enough for me. He shall judge for me, but I will not judge for others. And what does it matter? I do not want to write a novel now."

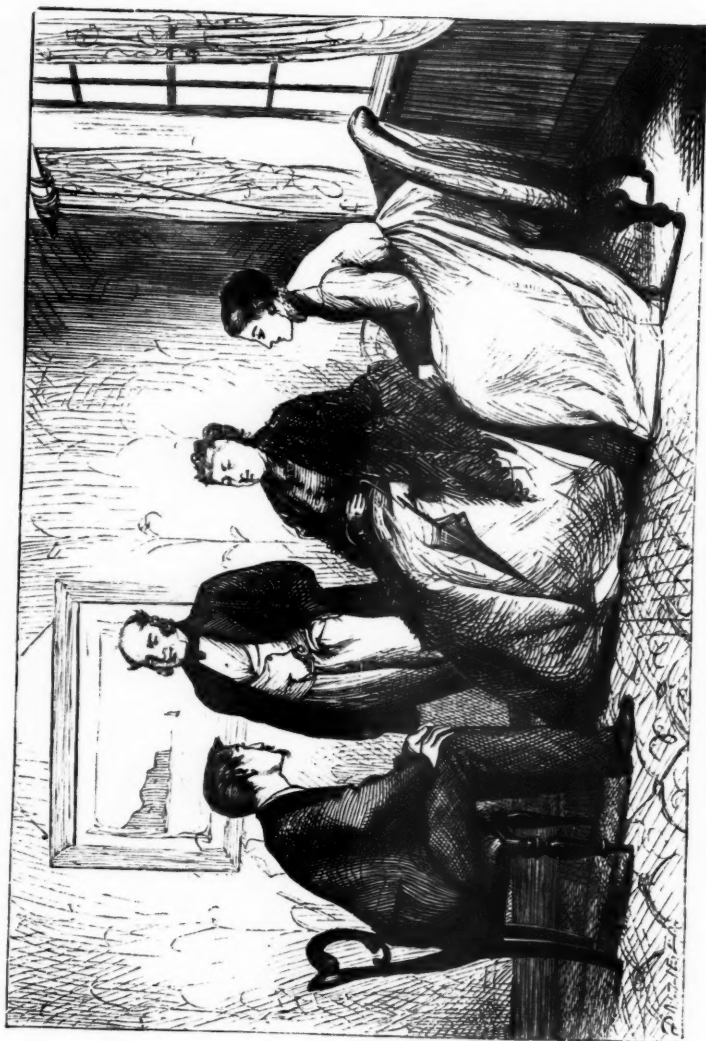
They remained in London till the end of the year for which the married curate had taken their house, and then they returned to Cornboro. We saw them frequently while they were still in town, and despatched them by the train to the north just when the winter was

beginning. At that time the young clergyman was still living down in Dorsetshire, but he was lying in his grave when Christmas came. Mary never saw him again, nor did she attend his funeral. She wrote to us frequently then, as she did for years afterwards. "I should have liked to have stood at his grave," she said; "but it was a luxury of sorrow that I wished to enjoy, and they who cannot earn luxuries should not have them. They were going to manage it for me here, but I knew I was right to refuse it." Right, indeed! As far as we knew her, she never moved a single point from what was right.

All these things happened many years ago. Mary Gresley, on her return to Cornboro, apprenticed herself, as it were, to the married curate there, and called herself, I think, a female Scripture reader. I know that she spent her days in working hard for the religious aid of the poor around her. From time to time we endeavoured to instigate her to literary work; and she answered our letters by sending us wonderful little dialogues between Tom the Saint and Bob the Sinner. We are in no humour to criticise them now; but we can assert, that though that mode of religious teaching is most distasteful to us, the literary merit shown even in such works as these was very manifest. And there came to be apparent in them a gleam of humour which would sometimes make us think that she was sitting opposite to us and looking at us, and that she was Tom the Saint, and that we were Bob the Sinner. We said what we could to turn her from her chosen path, throwing into our letters all the eloquence and all the thought of which we were masters; but our eloquence and our thought were equally in vain.

At last, when eight years had passed over her head after the death of Mr. Donne, she married a missionary who was going out to some forlorn country on the confines of African colonization; and there she died. We saw her on board the ship in which she sailed, and before we parted there had come that tear into her eyes, the old look of supplication on her lips, and the gleam of mirth across her face. We kissed her once,—for the first and only time,—as we bade God bless her!





The padrona sat on a sofa beside a rich, rustling, luxurious woman.

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